H A N N I B A L

Screenplay
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Based on the Novel
by
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INT. PANEL VAN - DAY

Clarice Starling is dead, laid out in fatigues across a bench in the back of a ratty, rattling undercover van. Three other agents sit perched on the opposite bench, staring at her lifeless body.

BURKE
How can she sleep at a time like this?

BRIGHAM
She's on a jump-out squad all night; she's saving her strength.

INT. UNDERGROUND GARAGE - DAY

Gray cement walls blur past as the panel van descends a circular ramp to a lower level. As it straightens out, the view through the windshield reveals a gathering of men and vehicles - marked and unmarked DC police cars - and two black SWAT vans.

The panel van - with *Marcell's Crab House* painted on its sides - pulls to a stop. The back doors open from the inside and Starling is the first one out - well-rested and alert - hoisting down her equipment bag.

One of the DC policemen, the one whose girth and manner say he's in charge, watches the woman by the van slip into a Kevlar vest, drop a Colt .45 into a shoulder holster, and a .38 into an ankle holster. She straightens up, approaches the men and lays a street plan across the hood of one of their cars.

STARLING
All right, everyone, pay attention. Here's the layout -

BOLTON
Excuse me, I'm Officer Bolton, DC Police.

STARLING
Yes, I can see that from your uniform and badge, how do you do?

BOLTON
I'm in charge here.

Starling studies him a moment. He sniffs as if that might help confirm his weighty position.

STARLING
You are?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOLTON
Yes, ma'am.

Starling's glance finds Brigham's. His says, Just let it go. Hers says back, I can't.

STARLING
Officer Bolton, I'm Special Agent Starling, and just so we don't get off on the wrong foot, let me explain why we're all here.

Brigham shakes his head to himself in weary anticipation of her 'explanation.'

STARLING
I'm here because I know Evelda Drumgo, I've arrested her twice on RICO warrants, I know how she thinks. DEA and BATF, in addition to backing me up, are here for the drugs and weapons. *You're* here, and it's the only reason you're here, because our mayor wants to appear tough on drugs, especially after his own cocaine conviction, and thinks he can accomplish that by the mere fact of having you tag along with us.

Silence as the gathering of agents and policemen stare at her and Bolton.

BOLTON
You got a smart mouth, lady.

STARLING
Officer, if you wouldn't mind, I'd appreciate it if you took a step or two back, you're in my light.

Bolton takes his time, but eventually backs away a step.

STARLING
Thank you. All right.
(re: the street plan)
The fish market backs on the water. Across the street, ground floor, is the meth lab -

EXT. FISH MARKET & STREETS - DAY

The Macarena blares from a boom box. Snappers, artfully arranged in schools on ice, stare up blankly. Crabs scratch at their crates. Lobsters climb over one another in tanks.

CONTINUED:

One of the black SWAT vans turns down a side street. The other takes an alley. The *Marcell's Crab House* van continues straight along Parcell Street.

INT. PANEL VAN - DAY

A 150-pound block of dry ice tries to cool down the heat from all the bodies in the van - Starling and Brigham, the two other agents, Burke and Hare, and her new best friend, Officer Bolton. As they drive along, Bolton watches as she takes several pairs of surgical gloves from her equipment bag, slips one pair on, and hands the rest to the others, the last pair offered to him.

STARLING
Drumgo's HIV positive and she *will* spit and bite if she's cornered, so you might want to put these on.
(Bolton takes the gloves and puts them on)
And if you happen to be the one who puts her in a patrol car in front of the cameras, and I have a feeling you *will* be, you don't want to push her head down, she'll likely have a needle in her hair.

EXT. FISH MARKET AREA - DAY

The swat vans pull into position, one to the side of the building across from the fish market, the other around back. As the battered van pulls to the curb in front, a mint low-rider Impala convertible, stereo thumping, cruises past.

INT. PANEL VAN - DAY

The thumping fades, leaving the *Macarena* filtering in. Starling pulls the cover off the eyepiece of a periscope bolted to the ceiling of the van and makes a full rotation of the objective lens concealed in the roof ventilator, catching glimpses of:

A man with big forearms cutting up a mako shark with a curved knife, hosing the big fish down with a powerful hand-held spray.

Young men idling on a corner in front of a bar. Others lounging in parked cars, talking. Some children playing by a burning mattress on the sidewalk; others in the rainbow spray from the fishmonger's hose.

The building across from the fish market with the metal door above concrete steps. It opens.

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Heads up.

A large white man in a luau shirt and sandals comes out with a satchel across his chest, other hand behind the case. A wiry black man comes out the door behind him, carrying a raincoat, and behind *him*, Evelda Drumgo.

STARLING
It's her. Behind two guys. Both packing.

BRIGHAM
(into a radio)
Strike One to all units. Showdown. She's out front, we're moving.

Starling and the others put on their helmets. Brigham racks the slide of his riot gun. The back doors open and Starling is the first one out, barking -

STARLING
Down on the ground! *Down on the ground!*

No one gets down on the ground - not Evelda Drumgo, not her men, none of the merchants or bystanders. *The Macarena* keeps blaring.

Drumgo turns and Starling sees the baby in the blanketed sling around her heck. She can also hear the roar of a big V8 and hopes it's her backup.

Drumgo turns slightly and the baby blanket flutters as the MAC 10 under it fires, shattering Brigham's face shield. As he goes down, Hawaiian Shirt drops his satchel and fires a shotgun, blowing out the car window next to Burke.

Gunshots from the V8, a Crip gunship, a Cadillac, coming toward Starling. Two shooters, Cheyenne-style in the rolled-down window frames, spraying automatic fire over the top.

Starling dives behind two parked cars. Hare and Bolton fire from behind another. Auto glass shatters and clangs on the ground.

Everyone in the market scrambling for cover finally, hitting the fish-bloodied cement. *The Macarena* still blasting.

Pinned down, Starling watches the wiry black man drop back against the building, Drumgo pick up the satchel, the gunship slowing enough for someone to pull her in.

CONTINUED: (2)

Starling stands and fires several shots, taking out Hawaiian Shirt, the other man by the building, the driver of the accelerating Cadillac, one of the men perched on the window frames - drops the magazine out of her .45 and slams another in before the empty hits the ground.

The Cadillac goes out of control, sideswiping a line of cars, grinds to a stop against them. Starling moving toward it now, following the sight of her gun. A shooter still sitting in a window frame, alive but trapped, chest compressed between the Cadillac and a parked car. Gunfire from somewhere behind Starling hits him and shatters the rear window.

STARLING
Hold it! Hold your fire! Watch the door behind me! Evelda!

The firing stops but the pounding of *The Macarena* doesn't.

STARLING
Evelda! Put you hands out the window!

Nothing for a moment. Then Drumgo emerges from the car, head down, hands buried in the blanket-sling, cradling the crying baby.

STARLING
Show me your hands!
(Evelda doesn't)
Please! Show me your hands!

Evelda looks up at her finally, fondly it seems, doesn't show her hands.

DRUMGO
Is that *you*, Starling?

STARLING
Show me your hands!

DRUMGO
How you been?

STARLING
Don't do this!

DRUMGO
Do what?

She smiles sweetly. The blanket flutters. Starling falls. Fires high enough to miss the baby. Hits Drumgo in the neck. She goes down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Starling crawling in the street, the wind knocked out of her from the hits to her chest, to her vest. Reaches Drumgo, blood gushing out of her onto the baby. She pulls out a knife. Cuts the harness straps. Runs with the baby to the merchant stalls as enterprising tourists click shots from the ground with disposable cameras.

Starling sweeps away knives and fish guts from a cutting table. Lays the baby down. Strips it. Grabs the handheld sprayer and washes at the slick coating of HIV positive blood covering the baby, a shark's head staring, *Macarena* pounding, disposable cameras clicking, the river of bloody water running along a gutter to where Brigham lies dead.

EXT. ARLINGTON CEMETERY - DAY

Gray sky. Rain coming down. A large gathering, many in uniform, standing in wet grass around an open grave, the rain spilling off the rims of their umbrellas.

A casket is being lowered in. Starling watches as it descends, watches the gears of the hoist working and the box disappearing beneath the edge of the muddy hole, not allowing herself to cry, or to meet the eyes of certain other mourners watching *her*.

EXT. ARLINGTON CEMETERY - LATER - DAY

Long line of parked cars, some marked, most not, many with government plates. Smoke plumes from the exhaust of the one idling nearest, a Crown Victoria.

Inside the car, Starling sits in the front passenger seat with a cardboard box on her lap, a middle-aged man in Marine dress blues beside her at the wheel. The wipers slap back and forth.

HAWKINS
You like to think when it's over your things would fill more than one cardboard box.

Starling touches the things in the box: a BATF badge, a couple of laminated clip-on ID cards with Brigham's face on them, a medal, a pen set, a compass paper-weight, two guns and a framed desk photo of a dog. *

HAWKINS
John's parents don't want it. Any of it. Except the dog. Don't want to be reminded. * *

CONTINUED:

STARLING
I want to be reminded.

HAWKINS
I figured. He was your last compadre on the street, wasn't he.

STARLING
My last compadre.

He sits watching her touch the things, and will continue to do so as long as she wants. Eventually, she folds down the cardboard flaps. Hawkins looks up ahead -

HAWKINS
All they'll get with tinted windows is pictures of themselves, but it won't stop them from trying. You ready?

She is. He pulls away from the curb. A handful of wet photographers appears in the windshield's view up ahead. As the car passes, their cameras swing around to point at Starling's side of it and flash like stars.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - FBI DC FIELD OFFICE - DAY

The words "Fidelity, Bravery, Integrity" skew as a glass door opens. Starling comes in to find several men awaiting her, all balanced on Florsheim wingtips and tasseled Thom McAn loafers.

PEARSALL
Agent Starling, this is John Eldredge from DEA; Assistant Director Noonan, of course you know; Larkin Wayne, from our Office of Professional Responsibility; Bob Sneed, BATF; Benny Holcome, Assistant to the Mayor; and Paul Krendler - you know Paul. Paul's come over from Justice - unofficially - as a favor to us. In other words, he's here and he's not here.

A couple of the men bobbed their heads at the mention of their names; none offered his hand. Starling sits, a thin manila folder on her lap. A silence stretches out as each man regards her. Finally -

SNEED
I take it you've seen the coverage in the papers and on television.
(nothing from Starling)
Agent Starling?

CONTINUED:

STARLING
I have nothing to do with the news, Mr. Sneed.

SNEED
The woman had a baby in her arms. There are pictures. You can see the problem.

STARLING
Not in her arms, in a sling across her chest. In her *arms*, she had a MAC 10. Mr. Pearsall? This is a friendly meeting, right?

PEARSALL
Absolutely.

STARLING
Then why is Mr. Sneed wearing a wire?

Pearsall glances to Sneed and his tie clasp. Sneed sighs.

SNEED
We're here to help you, Starling. That's going to be harder to do with a combative attitude like -

STARLING
Help me *what*? Your agency called this office and got me assigned to help *you* on the raid. I gave Drumgo a chance - two chances - to surrender. She didn't. She fired. She shot John Brigham. She shot at me. And I shot her. In that order. You might want to check your counter right there, where I admit it.

A silence before the man from the Mayor's Office speaks up -

HOLCOME
Ms. Starling, did you make some kind of inflammatory remark about Ms. Drumgo in the van on the way?

STARLING
Is that what your Officer Bolton is saying?
(he chooses not to say)
I explained to him, and the others in the van, that Drumgo was HIV positive and would think nothing of infecting them, and me, any way she could given the chance. If that's inflamma -

CONTINUED: (2)

HOLCOME
Did you also say to him at one point that a *splash of Canoe is not the same* as a shower?
(she doesn't answer)
Did Officer Bolton *smell* bad to you?

STARLING
Incompetence smells bad to me.

HOLCOME
You shot five people out there, Agent Starling. That may be some kind of record. Is that how you define competence?

A beeper goes off. Every one of the men checks the little box on his belt. It's Noonan's. He excuses himself from the room.

STARLING
Can I speak freely, Mr. Pearsall?
(he nods)
This raid was an ugly mess. I ended up in a position where I had a choice of dying, or shooting a woman carrying a child. I chose. I shot her -

FLASHCUT to Drumgo - hit in the neck by Starling's bullet - silently falling to the ground -

STARLING
I killed a mother holding her child. The lower *animals* don't do that. And I regret it. I resent myself for it. But I resent you, too - whichever of you thinks that by attacking me, bad press will go away. That Waco will go away. A mayor's drug habit. All of it.

FLASHCUT to Drumgo, lying dead in the road. then back here again to Starling, "watching" her in silence.

Noonan pokes his head in, gestures to Pearsall to join him in the anteroom. Krendler invites himself along. Sneed and Holcome get up and stare out the window. Eldredge paces, his wingtips soundlessly dragging on the carpet.

WAYNE
I know you haven't had a chance to write your 302 yet, Starling, but -

CONTINUED: (3)

STARLING
I have, sir. A copy's on its way to your office. I also have a copy with me if you want to review it now. Everything I did and saw.

She hands it to him. He begins leafing through it. Pearsall and Krendler reappear -

PEARSALL
Assistant Director Noonan is on his way back to his office, Gentlemen. I'm going to call a halt to this meeting and get back to you individually by phone.

Sneed cocks his head like a confused dog.

SNEED
We've got to decide some things here.

PEARSALL
No, we don't.

SNEED
Clint -

PEARSALL
Bob, believe me, we don't have to decide anything right this second. I said I'll get back to you.
(Pearsall's look to Starling says she's free to leave; she gets up)
And, Bob?

Pearsall grabs the wire behind Sneed's tie and pulls it down hard, the adhesive tape taking some chest hair along with it - judging from the grimace - as it comes away from his skin.

PEARSALL
You ever come in here wired again, I'll stick it up your ass.

INT. HALL OUTSIDE - MOMENTS LATER

Krendler - the only man who didn't speak in the meeting - idles outside. As Starling approaches -

KRENDLER
That was no free lunch, Starling. I'll call you.

She keeps going. He admires the back of her legs.

EXT. COUNTRY CLUB - MIAMI - DAY

Jack Crawford misses a 20-foot putt by inches.

GOLF PAL
Oh ... bad luck, Jack.

Crawford stares at the missed shot. Then spikes across the 18th green, taps it in, and groans the way anyone over forty does as he bends down to retrieve it.

Pocketing it he turns, sees Starling standing outside the club house. She waves, bending just a couple of fingers, and he smiles, pleased, but not surprised, to see her.

EXT. MIAMI - DAY

Crawford and Starling driving in his car, the clubs in the back seat. Palm tress float by.

STARLING
What's your handicap?

CRAWFORD
My handicap is I can't play golf.

STARLING
Maybe better clubs would help.

CRAWFORD
I play with the best clubs money can buy. It's not the clubs, it's a woeful lack of talent.

STARLING
Or interest.

He nods - yeah, that's the real problem with it - turns onto another street.

CRAWFORD
Were my flowers at John's service okay? Lot of times, flowers by wire, you never know.

STARLING
They were canary daffodils.
(he groans)
I put your name on my flowers.

CRAWFORD
Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Thank *you*. For the call. At the *Inquisition*. I *don't* know what you said to them, but it worked.

CRAWFORD
Don't thank me too quickly.

EXT. MIAMI - DAY

Downtown. Skyscrapers.

INT. BUILDING - DAY

Frameless glass doors in a sleek office building, etched: *Allied Security, Threat Assessment, Miami, Los Angeles, Rio de Janeiro.* Crawford holds one open for Starling and follows her into a handsome reception area.

RECEPTIONIST
How was it? Better today?

CRAWFORD
The clubs are in the dumpster downstairs if anyone wants them.

He leads Starling deeper into the place, past pairs of men in nice suits conferring in the doorway of a kitchenette and over by a long bank of filing cabinets. Male and female secretaries move about.

CRAWFORD
Nice, huh? This could all be yours, Starling. I can get you a PI ticket in Florida tomorrow, you can chase insurance scams, extortion against the cruise lines, put down the gun and have some fun with me.

Crawford accepts a handful of pink phone-message slips as they come past his secretary's desk, holds another door open and Starling steps into his office.

STARLING
Tempting.

CRAWFORD
Just wait.

The door closing softly behind her says, "expensive hardware."

INT. CRAWFORD'S OFFICE - DAY

They sit, Crawford behind his mahogany desk, Starling in a comfortable chair. As he rifles through the phone messages -

CRAWFORD
The call I made wasn't to Assistant Director Noonan. Whoever called *him*, I don't know. *I* called Mason Verger.

He lets the name sink down, lets her dive for it, try to place it. She can't. It's familiar but doesn't connect to anything stable.

CRAWFORD
Lecter's fourth victim, Starling. The one who lived, if you can call it *living*. *The rich one.*

He slides over a couple of photographs of a young man with a kind, trusting face. Now she remembers him.

CRAWFORD
I told Mason I wanted you off the street. I told him what I told you when I left the Bureau, "You go out with a gun enough times, you will be killed by one." I told him I want you where you belong, in Behavioral Science. Know what he said?

STARLING
He can speak?

CRAWFORD
It's about the only thing he can do. He said, after a very long pause, "Oh, what a good idea, Jack."
(Crawford tries to smile)
Who *he* called, I don't know. Someone higher up than anyone in that room with you. Maybe Representative Vollmer, who Mason may not *own*, but does *rent* from time to time.

Silence as Starling tries to take it all in. She looks up with a question forming in her mind, and Crawford nods before she can say it. Very matter of fact -

CRAWFORD
Yeah, that's right, it means going back on the Lecter case.

(CONTINUED)

He busies himself with the phone messages again, arranging them in little, prioritized piles on his desk, as if perhaps this conversation is about nothing more important than a simple missing person case.

STARLING
What if I said to you I'd rather not do that? What if I said to you I *prefer* the street?

CRAWFORD
You think this was a cheap deal? What you were *getting* was a cheap deal. What they say about federal examiners is true: they arrive after the battle and bayonet the wounded. You're not safe on the street anymore.

Starling takes another look at the photographs of Verger.

STARLING
Has something happened on the case?

CRAWFORD
Has Lecter killed anybody lately? I wouldn't know, I'm retired from all that. Mason doesn't know either, but he does apparently have some new information - which he'll only share with you.

They consider one another for a long moment. Finally -

CRAWFORD
He's not pretty, Starling. And I don't just mean his face.

EXT. MARYLAND - DAY

Bare trees. Overcast sky. Starling's Mustang growling along the rain-slicked expressway.

INT. MUSTANG - MOVING - DAY

A Maryland state map spread out across the passenger seat. Starling's eyes darting back and forth between the black and red route-veins and the shrouded countryside out beyond the slapping wiper blades.

An exit sign - and the exit itself - looms suddenly and rushes across the right side of her windshield. She curses to herself. It's the exit she wanted, but now it's gone, shrinking in her rearview mirror into the mist.

EXT. THE VERGER ESTATE - DAY

Coming back the other way along a service road, Starling slows to consider a chain-link gate stretched across a muddy road, then continues on.

At the gate house of the main entrance, a security guard checks her name against a list. He seems reluctant to get himself or his clipboard wet, but not her identification, handing it out past the edge of his umbrella to her.

The Mustang negotiates a long circuitous drive, taking her deeper and deeper into vast forest land. Eventually, though, a good mile from the gate house behind her, the trees give way to a clearing, and she sees the big Stanford White-designed mansion emerging from the mist up ahead.

A man waits under an umbrella out front, indicates to her where to park - *anywhere*, one should think - there's enough space for fifty cars - then comes around to the driver's side and opens the door.

CORDELL
Ms. Starling. Hi. I'm Cordell. Mr. Verger's private physician.

STARLING
How do you do?

She gathers her things out from under the map: file folder, micro-cassette recorder, extra tapes and batteries. He helps her out, then presses up against her to help maximize the umbrella's effectiveness.

CORDELL
Shall we make a run for it?

As they hurry toward the porch - if it can be called a porch, as grand an entrance as a king's, or English rock star's manor - Starling notices the building's one modern wing, sticking out like an extra limb attached in some grotesque medical experiment.

INT. VERGER'S MANSION - DAY

They cross through a living room larger than most houses, then down a hall, their shoes moving along a Moroccan runner, sleeves past portraits of important-looking dead people.

As they cross a threshold there's an abrupt shear in style: the rich carpet giving way to polished institutional floors, the portrait-lined walls to shiny white enamel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Cordell reaches for the handle of a closed door in the new wing, and Starling notices lines of light appear around the jamb where before there were none.

As the door opens, she squints. Two small photographer's spots on stands pitch narrow beams of light into her face and seem to follow her progress into the room.

CORDELL
(a whisper)
One's eyes adjust to the darkness.
This way is better.

He leads her to a sitting area where a print of William Blake's "The Ancient of Days" hangs above a large aquarium divided in two by a wall of glass - an eel gliding around on one side, a fish on the other. A bank of security monitors completes the decor. To the spotlights -

CORDELL
Mr. Verger, Ms. Starling is here.

The light stands flank a hospital bed, the beams effectively camouflaging the figure on it in their glare.

STARLING
Good morning, Mr. Verger.

MASON
Cordell, do you address a judge as Mr?

The voice is steady and resonant. An "educated" voice, not unlike Lecter's. Before Cordell can answer him -

MASON
Agent Starling is her proper title, not "*Ms.*"

CORDELL
Agent Starling.

MASON
Correct. Good morning, Agent Starling. Have a seat. Make yourself comfortable.

STARLING
Thank you.

Starling sits with her things. Snaps open the little door of her cassette recorder to verify there's a tape inside.

MASON
Was that a Mustang I heard out there?

CONTINUED: (2)

STARLING
Yes, it was.

MASON
Five-liter?

STARLING
'88 Stroker.

MASON
Fast.

STARLING
Yes.

MASON
Where'd you get it?

STARLING
Dope auction.

MASON
Very good.

STARLING
Mr. Verger, the discussion we're going to have is in the nature of a deposition. I'll need to tape record it if that's all right with you.

MASON
Cordell, I think you can leave us now.

CORDELL
I thought I might stay. Perhaps I could be useful if -

MASON
You could be useful seeing about my lunch.

Starling gets up, but not to see him out. Once he's gone -

STARLING
I'd like to attach this microphone to your - clothing, or pillow - if you're comfortable with that.

MASON
By all means.

CONTINUED: (3)

She walks slowly toward the bed, or rather to the lights, uncertain exactly what position Verger may be in - on his back, his side; she has no way of knowing.

MASON
Here, this should make it easier.

A finger like a pale spider crab moves along the sheet and depresses a button. The lights suddenly extinguish and Starling's pupils dilate. As her eyes adjust to the darkness Verger's face materializes in it like something dead rising up through dark water:

Face is the wrong word. He has no face to speak of. No skin, at least. Teeth he has. He looks like some kind of creature that resides in the lowest depths of the sea.

She doesn't flinch. Maybe the hand with the microphone recoils an inch or two, but that's it. She clips it to the flannel lapel of his pajamas, drapes the skinny cord over the side of the pillow and sets the recorder on the medical table next to the bed.

MASON
You know, I thank God for what happened. It was my salvation. Have you accepted Jesus, Agent Starling? Do you have faith?

STARLING
I was raised Lutheran.

MASON
That's not what I asked -

STARLING
This is Special Agent Clarice Starling, FBI number 5143690, deposing Mason R. Verger, Social Security number -

MASON
- 475-98-9823 -

STARLING
- at his home on the date stamped above, sworn and attested.
(she drags over a chair)
Mr. Verger, you claim to have -

MASON
I want to tell you about summer camp. It was a wonderful childhood experience -

CONTINUED: (4)

STARLING
We can get to that later. The -

MASON
We can get to it now. You see, it all comes to bear, it's where I met Jesus and I'll never tell you anything more important than that. It was a Christian camp my father paid for. Paid for the whole thing, all 125 campers on Lake Michigan. Many of them were unfortunate, cast-off little boys and girls would do *anything* for a candy bar. Maybe I took advantage of that. Maybe I was rough with them -

STARLING
Mr. Verger, I don't need to know about the sex offenses. I just -

MASON
It's all right. I have immunity, so it's all right now. I have immunity from the U.S. Attorney. I have immunity from the D.A. in Owings Mills. I have immunity from the Risen Jesus and nobody beats the Riz.

STARLING
What I'd like to know is if you'd ever seen Dr. Lecter before the court assigned you to him for therapy?

MASON
You mean - *socially*?
(laughs)

STARLING
That *is* what I mean, yes. Weren't you both on the board of the Baltimore Philharmonic?

MASON
Oh, no, my seat was just because my family contributed. I sent my lawyer when there was a vote.

STARLING
Then I'm not sure I understand how he ended up at your house that night, if you don't mind talking about it.

MASON
Not at all. I'm not ashamed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

STARLING
I didn't say you should be.

MASON
I invited him, of course. He was too professional to just sort of "drop in." I answered the door in my nicest come-hither leather outfit.

FLASHCUT of the door opening, revealing Verger, in his leather gear, his face young and pretty.

MASON
I was concerned he'd be afraid of me, but he didn't seem to be. *Afraid* of me; that's funny now.

FLASHCUT of Verger leading Lecter upstairs, each with a glass of wine in hand.

MASON
I showed him my toys, my noose set-up among other things - where you sort of *hang* yourself but not really? It feels good while you - you know.

FLASHCUT to some dogs watching Verger with the noose around his neck, and Lecter offering him some amyl nitrite.

MASON
Anyway - he said, *Would you like a popper, Mason?* I said, *Would* I. And *whoa*, once that kicked in I knew it was more than simple amyl, it was some kind of custom meth-angel-acid *high*ball. *Lovely.* I was *flying* -

FLASHBACK to Mason's image in a full-length mirror shattering as Lecter kicks it.

MASON V/O
The good doctor came over with a piece of broken mirror. *Mason*, he said -

LECTER
- show me how you smile to get the confidence of a child.

Lecter holds a shard of mirror glass in front of him.

LECTER
Uh-*huh*. Do you ever smile? Oh, I see how you do it.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

LECTER (CONT'D)
Now, Mason, let's say you had to hide that kindly, fictitious mask? How would you do it?

Verger tries to look serious, or mean, but his features are just too sweet, even with a noose around his neck.

LECTER
No, I still see it. Try again.
(Verger tries again)
No. No, I'm afraid not. Try this.
(hands him the glass)
Try peeling off your face with this and feeding it to the dogs.

As Verger lifts the broken glass to his face -

BACK TO the faceless Verger in the bed, his claw of a hand gripping invisible glass -

MASON
Well, you know the rest.
(shrugs)
Seemed like a good idea at the time.

Starling looks like someone who has just received much more information than she ever needed or wanted. Cordell comes in quietly with Verger's lunch on a rolling cart and, trying not to interrupt, arranges the silverware and pours some water.

STARLING
Mr. Verger, you -

MASON
Are you *shocked*, Agent S?

STARLING
You indicated to -
(her eyes dart to the tape, and his follow them)
- to my office - that you've received some kind of new information.

MASON
Look in the drawer of the end table.

Starling takes out of pair of thin cotton gloves and puts them on. In the drawer she finds a large manila envelope and *in it*, an x-ray of an arm.

STARLING
Where did this come from?

CONTINUED: (7)

MASON
Buenos Aires. I received it two weeks ago.

STARLING
Where's the package it came in?

MASON
The package it came in... *good* question. I don't know. There was nothing written on it of interest. Did I throw it out?

Starling smells a rat, but keeps it to herself. Takes a closer look at the x-ray while Cordell busies himself climbing a step ladder next to the aquarium.

MASON
Think it will help? I hope so. I hope it'll help you catch him, if for no other reason than to heal the stigma of your recent dishonor.

She switches off the tape recorder.

STARLING
Thank you, that's all I -

MASON
Did you feel some rapport with Dr. Lecter in your talks at the asylum? I know *I* did while I was peeling.

STARLING
We exchanged information in a civil way.

MASON
But always through the glass.

STARLING
Yes.

MASON
The eel and fish become accustomed to each other through the glass. They're even company for one another.

Cordell's gloved hand grips the snapper and transfers it to the other side of the aquarium, where the eel at once rips a piece out of it. Starling tries to ignore it and reaches to unclip the microphone from Verger's pajamas lapel.

MASON
Isn't it funny?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (8)

STARLING
(nothing is particularly funny to her right now)
What's that?

MASON
You can look at my face, but you shied when I said the name of God.

INT. EVIDENCE STORAGE - QUANTICO - DAY

A clerk is cataloging strange items from another case as Starling inspects what he brought her on Lecter. There's not much there. One cardboard box-worth, some files, video tape.

CLERK
Not finding what you want?

STARLING
Are you sure this is all of it?

CLERK
That's all of it now. There used to be more, but it's been picked over little by little over the years. It's worth a lot of money in certain circles. Like the cocaine that disappears around here. Little by little.

INT. BASEMENT - BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE - DAY

The room Starling's been given to work out of used to be the department's basement darkroom. There's almost nothing in it now. Couple of old enlargers, chemical trays, an ugly rented couch, a metal desk, a computer, and a blackboard on wheels she has chalked with the headings "Lecter" and "Verger," a few scribbled notes under each name.

She's taken the video tape from the paltry contents of the evidence box and puts it in a VCR. In a moment, a scene in black and white, captured by a security camera at the Baltimore State Hospital for the Criminally Insane, plays out in silence:

Lecter wired up for an EKG. A female nurse getting too close. Lecter attacking her. Biting her. A black orderly rushing in and roughly subduing him, breaking his arm in the process, then attending to the fallen nurse.

INT. BASEMENT - BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE - LATER

A cursor blinks in a search panel. Starling types in "Hannibal Lecter," enters it and waits.

The laptop screen fills with a listing of sites, the first 20 of 611,046, according to the engine. A banner to one side offers, "Amazon.com ... Hannibal Lec ... Save up to 50% ... Shop-4-Pokemon."

One of the listings is the FBI's own consumer site, others refer to published articles by and about Lecter, but most have names like, "Hannibal's Chamber of Horrors," and "Fava Beans Anyone?"

Starling scrolls down to the bottom query panel to narrow her search. Adds, "memorabilia," and hits Enter. The screen fills with another listing of sites, like, "Kenny's Trading Post," and, "World Wide Collectibles," with brief descriptions of some of the wares offered:

"Credit card receipt from Dean & DeLuca w/genuine signature of Hannibal Lecter, $550 OBO / PP."

"Mark McGuire 1998 season home run ball (#67), w/papers, all reasonable offers considered."

"Flatware w/etched lions on handles, owned by Hannibal Lecter. 24 pieces, one spoon missing. Real. No dealers. $6,500."

"Hockey, basketball (and non-sports) trading cards."

"Lecter victim (#3) Sam Sirrah's death certificate. Not a Xerox. Nice frame. Price upon request."

"Hannibal Lecter's '62 Mercedes. Really. Only two owners since incarceration. Clean. 85,000."

"Valentine card from H. Lecter. Signed. Sweet sentiment. Hate to part with it but need money. $950."

No x-rays. Starling thinks. Clears the address in the top panel and types something else. A new screen appears, headed with bold, colorful lettering: "eBay."

She types in "Hannibal Lecter" again. Hits the "*Find it!*" button. An auction screen appears. 14 items. "H. Lecter x-ray" second from the top. "Item #194482661." 61 bidders. In red: "Ends in 49 Mins."

She highlights the item and is taken to the details screen. Scrolls down. No photo, but there is a description: "Left arm x-ray of Hannibal Lecter. Very rare. Slightly used metal light box included."

She backs up to the previous screen. Last bid, "$7,200." Next increment, $100. She types in "$10,000" and hits *Enter.*

INT. SCI-FI COMICS - DAY

Strange denizens - collectors - roam the shelves lined with plastic-sheathed science fiction comic books - browsing and humming - each in his own world.

In truth, they're not really browsing; they're stealing glances at Starling, the only woman in the place, and the most beautiful one any of them has ever seen in real life.

In truth, she isn't really browsing either. She's stealing glances at the proprietor behind the glass-top, trading card-filled, counter.

CUSTOMER
December you mean -

PROPRIETOR
No, not *D*ecember. *N*ovember. Volume Four, Number Four. Worst. Issue. Ever.

The customer moves on. Starling wanders over and several pairs of eyes wander with her. A tape of the X-Files plays on a small television set at one end of the counter, which the proprietor pays more attention to than her. Quietly -

STARLING
I'm interested in Hannibal Lecter memorabilia.

The man's head slowly turns to her with the most withering of looks. She's the last person on *earth* who'd be interested in Hannibal Lecter memorabilia.

PROPRIETOR
I don't handle Hannibal Lecter memorabilia. Hannibal Lecter memorabilia - *real* Hannibal Lecter memorabilia - would have to be stolen. I don't deal in stolen goods. Try Sotheby's.

STARLING
I'm confused.

PROPRIETOR
You're a policeman, of course you're confused.

STARLING
Not exactly.

PROPRIETOR
Oh, all right. Police *woman*. I keep the politically-correct comics in the back. By the toilet scrubber.

She shows him her identification. Her FBI shield. Some of the other customers see it, too, and - crushed - begin gliding toward the door.

STARLING
I'm confused because I just paid you ten thousand dollars for an x-ray of Hannibal Lecter. I don't want to wait for you to send it, I want to pick it up now.

The dime drops. Just a fleeting spark of realization.

PROPRIETOR
No, if you paid me ten thousand dollars for an x-ray of Hannibal Lecter, I would possess a money order, or cashiers check, for ten thousand dollars, which I do not. You *bid* ten thousand dollars for an x-ray of Hannibal Lecter. I've decided, in the *interim*, not to sell it. You're free to write a nasty comment about me on the e-Bay message board.

STARLING
I'm free to write a nasty comment about you on your arrest report.

PROPRIETOR
(sighs)
The x-ray I was *thinking* of selling, but have now decided against, is *not* of Hannibal Lecter. How do I know this? Because it's of me. This arm.
(pointing to it, then to the other one)
No, this one.

Now *she* sighs. She should just leave.

PROPRIETOR
Wait a minute. I *know* you.
(he brightens considerably)
You're -

He rummages behind the counter and comes up with a recent, plastic-wrapped issue of the National Tattler tabloid, with gory pictures of the shoot-out and the screaming headline - "DEATH ANGEL: CLARICE STARLING, THE FBI'S KILLING MACHINE."

CONTINUED: (2)

PROPRIETOR
Would you be so kind, Miss Starling, as to sign this for me? I apologize for my - um - my -

CUSTOMER (O.S.)
Rude -

PROPRIETOR
Rude - behavior - before.

He delicately slips the newspaper from it's plastic cover. Checks the condition of the tip of a fine-line Sharpie. His eyes are eager now, his demeanor painfully solicitous, like a sweetly disarming little boy waiting for the baseball players to finish batting practice. Starling turns and leaves.

EXT. MARYLAND-MISERACORDIA GENERAL HOSPITAL - DAY

A wailing siren. Ambulance pulling up in front of an Emergency Entrance. Paramedics climb out, hoist down a gurney and the bleeding gunshot victim on in, and hurry him in past the automatic doors. They doors thump shut.

A moment later they open again and an orderly - same one from the tape - steps out, finished with his shift, coat over his uniform. He hitches up his collar and steps out into the drizzling rain as Starling, across the street in a hooded sweatshirt, watches.

EXT. STREETS - LATER - DAY

The orderly moves along a wet sidewalk, heading home, Starling following at a distance. He stops. She stops. He glances to something in the middle of the street. A dead dove, one wing fluttering in the wind. He looks up. Sees its mate pacing on a wire. Car tires hiss past below.

Starling watches as he crosses to the center of the street, picks up the dead dove and pockets it, crosses back and continues on. She, and the surviving bird, follow.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - UPSTAIRS HALL - DAY

Starling knocks. Waits. The door opens and the orderly peers out with the dead dove in his hands.

STARLING
Hi, Barney. I need to talk with -

BARNEY
Would you agree, for the record, Officer Starling, I've not been read my rights?

(CONTINUED)

STARLING
This is just informal. I just need to ask you about some stuff.

BARNEY
How about saying it into your handbag?

Starling opens her purse and speaks down into it as though there were a troll inside -

STARLING
I have not Mirandized Barney. He is unaware of his rights.

Barney widens the door so she can come in.

INT. BARNEY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Barney sets the dove on a desk and drags a computer mouse to the "file close" x. Just before the screen reverts to the AOL Welcome page, Starling glimpses the site he was on when she interrupted him with her knock - stock quotes.

STARLING
How you been? *

He doesn't answer. Sits his huge frame down on his desk chair. She moves some newspapers aside on a couch, one of which shows a photo of her from the Drumgo raid. They consider each other for a moment. Eventually - * * *

STARLING
Barney, back when you turned Dr. Lecter over to the Tennessee Police - *

BARNEY
They weren't civil to him. And they're all dead now.

STARLING
Yeah. They only managed to survive his company three days. You survived him six years at the asylum. How'd you do that? It wasn't just being civil. * * *

BARNEY
Yes, it was.

They both hear something - a flutter - and glance out to the fire escape. The dead dove's mate has landed on the railing. *

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Did you ever think, once he escaped, he might come after you?

BARNEY
No. He told me once that, whenever feasible, he preferred to eat the rude. "Free-range rude," he called them.

He smiles. Glances out the window again to the cooing dove. Picks up the dead one, carries it out and sets it down on the wet grating.

STARLING
Any idea what happened to all his stuff? His books and papers and drawings and -

BARNEY
Everything got thrown out when the place closed.

He comes back in. She starts to say something, hesitates. Once she starts on *this* subject, she knows one of them will wind up very unhappy.

STARLING
Barney, I just found out that Dr. Lecter's signed copy of *The Joy of Cooking* went to a private collector for sixteen thousand dollars.

BARNEY
It was probably a fake.

STARLING
The seller's affidavit of ownership was signed, *Karen Phlox*. You know Karen Phlox? You should. "She" filled out your employment application, only at the bottom she signed it, *Barney*. Same thing on your tax returns.

Long silence. Then Barney sighs.

BARNEY
You want the book? Maybe I could get it back.

STARLING
I want the x-ray. From when you broke his arm after he attacked that nurse.

CONTINUED: (2)

Barney gets up again but doesn't run off to get it. He slowly paces around.

BARNEY
We talked about a lot of things, late at night, after all the screaming died down. We talked about you sometimes. Want to know what he said?

STARLING
No, just the x-ray.

BARNEY
Is there a reward?

STARLING
Yeah. The reward is I don't have my friend the Postal Inspector nail you on *Use of the Mails to Defraud*, you don't get ten years, and you don't come out with a janitor's job and a room at the Y, sitting on the side of your bunk at night listening to yourself cough.

He stares at her, gets up finally, disappears into the bedroom. Starling looks out to the fire escape again. The surviving dove has dropped down and is now walking in circles around its lifeless mate.

Barney returns with a file box and a large envelope. Hands it all to her. She unfurls the string-clasp. Pulls out an x-ray of an arm. A radiologist's and Lecter's names are on it.

BARNEY
I'm not a bad guy.

STARLING
I didn't say you were.

BARNEY
Dr. *Chil*ton is a bad guy. After your first visit, he began taping your conversations with Dr. Lecter.

He produces from his jacket pocket several cassette tapes. As he hands them to her -

BARNEY
I was good to you. Tried to make it easy for you the first time you came down to the violent ward to interview Dr. Lecter. Remember?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

STARLING
Yes.

BARNEY
You remember saying thank you?

She doesn't because she didn't, and now regrets it.

STARLING
I'm sorry. Thank you.

BARNEY
You mean it?

STARLING
Yes.

BARNEY
I'm going to show you something then. I don't *have* to show it to you, remember that. But I believe your gratitude is sincere.

He goes to a fuse box on the wall. Takes something out of it. Turns around to face Starling, wearing the famous mask from *Silence of the Lambs*, and her hand flashes toward her sidearm, a movement quickly stopped.

BARNEY
This is my retirement fund.
(removes the mask)
If you'll let me keep it. I can a lot of money for this and get out of here for good. I want to travel, and see every Vermeer in the world before I die.

She thinks about it, doesn't immediately answer him. He walks out onto the fire escape again and addresses the bird -

BARNEY
Go on. You've grieved long enough.

He shoos the dove away, picks up the dead one, comes back in and drops it in the wastebasket by his desk.

STARLING
What did he say? About me? Late at night.

BARNEY
We were talking about inherited, hard-wired behavior. He was using genetics in roller pigeons as an example.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BARNEY (CONT'D)
They go way up in the air and roll over backwards in a display, falling toward the ground. There are shallow rollers and deep rollers. You can't breed two deep rollers or the offspring will roll all the way down, crash and die. He said, "Officer Starling is a deep roller, Barney. Let's hope one of her parents was not."

As Starling gets up and gathers everything *except the mask*, she hears the surviving dove call out once from somewhere in the trees.

INT. FBI LAB - DAY

The two x-rays, one overlaid on the other, clipped to a light box. A technician adjusts them so the bone structures correspond in position as closely as possible and points out to Starling -

TECHNICIAN
They're the same arm. The discrepancy is the dates. This one -

He slides the x-rays apart, touches a thin gray line on one of them -

TECHNICIAN
- shows the hairline fracture he sustained in the fight with the orderly. This one -
(the other x-ray)
- the more recent one, supposedly, doesn't. *This* is the newer of the two -
(the other one)
- the one from the asylum.

INT. BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE - LATER

Starling puts the earliest-dated cassette into a player, presses "play," walks up to the blackboard and under Verger's heading - below "Meat-packing heir" and some other notes - writes, "<u>He lies</u>." From the tape player -

LECTER'S VOICE
Surely the odd confluence of events hasn't escaped you, Clarice. Jack Crawford dangles you in front of me, then I give you a bit of help. Do you think it's because I like to look at you and imagine how good you would taste?

CONTINUED:

There's a pause. Starling, remembering the moment clearly even now, mouths along with her recorded voice -

STARLING'S VOICE
I don't know. Is it?

INT. CELL - BALTIMORE STATE HOSPITAL FOR THE CRIMINALLY INSANE - DAY - (FLASHBACK - 1994)

It's Lecter's cell. And it's almost pitch black. Then, as he turns a rheostat, the lights slowly rise, revealing the cell to be almost empty, stripped of its books. He's lying on his cot.

LECTER
I've been in this room for eight years, Clarice. I know they will never - ever - let me out while I'm alive. What I want ... is a view.

EXT. FLORENCE - DAY

One of the most magnificent views in the world.

Drifting across it, then down, reveals a piazza below. Outside a cafe, a figure in a dark overcoat, his back to us, drops crumbs to a hundred pigeons surrounding him.

Closer, the pigeons swirl around his shoes. And slowly the figure turns to face us. It's not Hannibal Lecter. It's someone we don't recognize.

He lets go the last of the crumbs, brushes his gloves together, and crosses toward the ancient Palazzo Vecchio, glancing once at its high, stone walls and arched windows, its medieval bell tower soaring into the sky.

INT. PALAZZO VECCHIO - DAY

Checking his watch, but in no hurry, he climbs a flight of marble steps. Unlike here, one more often smokes indoors than out, and the man lights an MS cigarette, his reward for reaching the landing.

ECHOING VOICE
The Capponi correspondence goes back to the 13th Century. Dr. Fell might hold in his hand, in his *non*-Italian hand, a note from Dante Alighieri himself, but would he *recognize* it? I think *not* -

CONTINUED:

He follows the echoing voice to the open doorway of a large, frescoed room, the Salon of Lilies, where another gentleman, loitering outside it, pats at his pockets. The man we've been following offers, along with an outstretched hand holding his pack of cigarettes -

PAZZI
They're still arguing.

RICCI
(nodding)
The curatorship. Sogliato wants the job for his nephew. The scholars seem satisfied with the temporary guy they appointed.

Pazzi lights Ricci, glances down the hall to the far end, where a janitor slowly guides a floor polisher back and forth like a big, weak motorcycle, then crosses to and peers into the Salon:

It's under long-term restoration, scaffolding everywhere. A large assembly of men ranging in age from middle-aged to the Middle Ages, it seems, are gathered around a long 12th-century table. The echoing voice belongs to -

SOGLIATO
You have examined him in medieval Italian, and I'll not deny his language is admirable. For a *straniero*. But what if he came upon a note in the Capponi library, say, from Guido de'Cavalcanti to Dante? Would he recognize *it*? I think not.

Pazzi isn't sure which one *is* Fell. Scanning the room from the doorway, he tries to locate the source of the voice, but it's difficult, the high ceilings playing hell with the acoustics -

DR. FELL
Professor Sogliato, if I might. Cavalcanti, as we all know, replied publicly to Dante's first sonnet in *La Vita Nuova*. *If* he commented privately as well, *if* he wrote to a Cappono, to which would it be? In your opinion?
(Sogliato clearly can't even *name* the Capponi)
No? Not even a guess? Andrea, don't you think? Since he was more literary than his brothers.

CONTINUED: (2)

Several of the other scholars nod their heads in agreement, which only embarrasses Sogliato more. Pazzi knows which man at the table Fell is now, however he - and we - still can't see his face, seated as he is with his back to the door.

SOGLIATO
If he is such an expert on Dante let him lecture on Dante - *to the Studiolo.* Let him face <u>them</u>, if he can.

DR. FELL
I'd look forward to it. Shall we set the date now?

Sogliato has had enough and gets up, noisily gathering his things. As the meeting breaks up some of the other committee members shake Fell's hand. Pazzi comes in and approaches Fell - from behind - as the others straggle out.

PAZZI
Dr. Fell?

Fell turns. Of course, it's Hannibal Lecter.

PAZZI
Chief Inspector Rinaldo Pazzi of the Questura.

DR. FELL
(shaking his hand)
Commendatore. How can I be of service?

PAZZI
I'm investigating the disappearance of your predecessor, Signore de Bonaventura. I was wondering if -

DR. FELL
Predecessor implies I have the job. Unfortunately, I don't. Not yet. Though I'm hopeful. They *are* letting me look after the library. For a stipend.

Fell begins gathering his books and papers, placing them neatly in his satchel.

PAZZI
Yes. Well -

DR. FELL
What do you think happened to him?

CONTINUED: (3)

PAZZI
To your - to the Signore? - who can say? Perhaps he ran off. Bad debts. Bad love affair. I was wondering if you might -

DR. FELL
Not another victim of *Il Mostro*?

PAZZI
What? No. That I'm sure. We find *Il Mostro's* victims. He makes sure we find them.

DR. FELL
Or she.

PAZZI
Or she.

DR. FELL
I never actually met Signore de Bonaventura. I *have* read several of his monographs in the *Nuova Antologia*.

PAZZI
The officers who first checked, didn't find any sort of - farewell or - suicide note. I was wondering if -

DR. FELL
If *I* happen to come across anything in the Capponi Library, stuffed in a book or a drawer - yes, I'll call you at once.

He accepts Pazzi's card and slips it under a paperclip holding some of his notes together.

PAZZI
Thank -

DR. FELL
You've been reassigned.

Pazzi was just turning to leave. Turns back.

PAZZI
Pardon?

DR. FELL
You were on the *Il Mostro* case, I'm sure I read.

PAZZI
That's right.

And it was a humiliation being taken off of it, which he would no doubt rather not discuss here.

DR. FELL
Now you're on this. This is much less - *grand* - a case, I would think.

PAZZI
If I thought of my work in those terms, yes, I guess I'd agree.

DR. FELL
A missing person.

Fell says it like it's not *worth* saying. Pazzi's had enough and turns to leave again.

DR. FELL
Were you un*fairly* dismissed from the grander case? Or did you deserve it?

Pazzi looks back again. Fell isn't even looking at him; putting things in his case.

PAZZI
Regarding *this* one, Dr. Fell. Are the Signore's personal effects still at the Palazzo?

DR. FELL
Packed neatly in two cases with an inventory. Alas, no note.

PAZZI
I'll send someone over to pick them up. Thank you for your help.

He starts to leave again.

DR. FELL
Have you thought about Botticelli?

Pazzi looks back again. What is Fell talking about?

PAZZI
Not since middle school art class, I'm afraid.

CONTINUED: (5)

DR. FELL
Those awful pictures in the papers of The Monster's victims. His careful arrangement of the young lovers' bodies. The flowers. The women's exposed left breast. The tableaux remind me of Botticelli. Don't they, you?

Frankly, it never occurred to him. Fell points to a place just behind Pazzi and he turns to see a beautiful Botticelli in a carved gold frame, the woman lying in flowers, her left breast exposed. Fell shrugs as he closes his satchel.

DR. FELL
Maybe a clue.

EXT. FELL'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A row of family palaces in an ancient street. A figure walking on the cobblestones. Only vaguely familiar, his path leads us to the front of an old residence, its windows behind iron grates, all but one on an upper floor dark. The figure continues on down the street, but we go inside -

INT. FELL'S RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Even though the foyer is dark, we can tell it's large and high-ceilinged. We become aware of music - Bach's *Goldberg Variations* - but can't be sure where it's coming from.

We notice a staircase and decide to climb it. It's longer than we thought at first - its steps made of thick slabs of ancient stone, its rail of cold hammered iron.

We reach the landing. Notice a small darkened room to one side. But the music seems to coming from elsewhere, so we continue on, down the hall to a pair of tall double doors, open, allowing us into the main salon. The music seems to be coming from somewhere in here.

We move through the room, illuminated only faintly by the occasional candle, look up to see that the height of the room disappears into darkness, then down again as we are almost upon the figure sitting at a piano.

Lecter's fingers move among the yellowed ivory keys. He plays the Bach piece well, every so often glancing to a lyre-shaped music stand. But coming slowing around the stand, we discover there is no sheet music on it, but instead a copy of the National Tattler with a picture of a black woman dead in the street, and another picture of Clarice Starling - the FBI's "ANGEL OF DEATH" - washing down a baby next to the head of a shark.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LECTER'S VOICE
Dear Clarice, I have followed with enthusiasm the course of your disgrace and public shaming. My own never bothered me, except for the inconvenience of being incarcerated, but you may lack perspective -

The music continues over:

INT. FELL'S RESIDENCE - LATER - NIGHT

Sitting at a 16th-century refectory table in a pool of lamp light, Lecter dips the tip of a fountain pen into an etched glass bottle of ink and signs the letter he has just written.

LECTER'S VOICE
In our discussions down in the dungeon, it was apparent to me that your father - the dead night watchman - figures large in your value system.

He adds a brief post-script, folds the linen-fiber paper over once, careful to line up the edges, gives it a sharp crease.

LECTER'S VOICE
I think your success in putting an end to Jame Gumb's career as a couturier pleased you most because you could imagine your *father* being pleased.

He places the letter in an envelope that is already addressed to *Special Agent Clarice Starling*, and seals it with wax. He places it into another, slightly larger envelope that already has written on it a Las Vegas, Nevada, address.

EXT. FLORENCE - DAY

Lecter strolls across a bridge over the Arno and drops his envelope into a post box on the other side.

LECTER'S VOICE
Now you are in bad odour with the FBI, alas. Do you imagine Daddy shamed by your disgrace? Do you see him in his plain pine box, *crushed* by your failure? The sorry, petty end of a promising career?

EXT. LAS VEGAS - DAY

A U.S. Mail carrier's truck pulls into the parking lot of a strip mall.

CONTINUED:

LECTER'S VOICE
Do you dream now, not of screaming lambs, but of yourself doing the menial tasks your mother was reduced to after the addicts busted a cap on Daddy?

INT. RE-MAILING SERVICE - LAS VEGAS - DAY

Piles of mail on the counter. A middle-aged man slits open the envelope from Italy, takes out the smaller envelope, puts a stamp on it, drops it onto a pile of outgoing mail and throws the larger envelope away.

LECTER'S VOICE
What is worst about this humiliation? Is it how your failure will reflect on them? Is your worst fear that people will forever now believe your parents were indeed trailer camp tornado-bait white trash? That *you* are? Hmmm?

INT. FBI BASEMENT - DAY

The letter is among stacks of others in a metal cart as it is wheeled along a basement corridor.

LECTER'S VOICE
I couldn't help noticing on its rather dull public web site, Clarice, that I've been hoisted from the Bureau's Archives of the Common Criminal up to the more prestigious 10 Most Wanted list.

The mail cart comes to and past a door on which, instead of a nameplate, is Scotch-taped a piece of legal pad paper with one hand-scrawled word: "Starling."

LECTER'S VOICE
Coincidence? Or are you "back on the case?"

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - CONTINUOUS

The mail room boy navigates the short maze of black right-angled darkroom walls that lead to the room itself.

LECTER'S VOICE
I imagine you sitting in a dark basement room, bent over papers and computer screens at clerk's distances that mocks the prairie distance in your eyes. A zoo hawk, one wing hanging down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The mail room boy sets three or four things down on Starling's desk.

LECTER'S VOICE
Is that fairly accurate? Tell me truly, Special Agent Starling. Regards, Hannibal Lecter, M.D.

The music ends. To the mail room boy -

STARLING
Thanks.

He doesn't immediately leave. He watches her tack to a bulletin board the last of several newspaper clippings and Internet downloads of grisly unsolved murders world-wide.

GEOFFREY
How's it going? Any leads?

STARLING
They're all leads. They just don't lead to *him*.

She sits at her desk to take a look at the mail. Geoffrey wanders over to take a look at the clippings. He grimaces at one of them.

GEOFFREY
I don't know how you live with this stuff.

STARLING
Oh, God.

He turns. She's looking at one of her pieces of mail.

STARLING
It's from the Guinness Book of World Records congratulating me on being "The Female FBI Agent Who Has Shot The Most People."

She throws it in the wastebasket, picks up the envelope with the wax seal and fine copperplate writing, and somehow immediately knows who it's from.

STARLING
Geoffrey - ? Would you excuse me.

CONTINUED: (2)

He sees she isn't looking at him. Leaves with his cart. Annoyed at herself for getting her paw prints all over the letter, she reaches for her key chain, slits the envelope with the Swiss Army knife on it, and extracts and unfolds the letter with the blade. As she reads it, there is a faint echoing refrain of Bach's *Goldberg Variations*, and -

LECTER'S VOICE
P.S. Clearly this new assignment is not your choice. Rather, it is part of "the bargain." But you *accepted* it, Clarice. Your job is to craft my doom. As such, I'm not sure how well to wish you. Ta-ta. H.

INT. FBI LAB - DAY

Digitized images of the letter alongside "Early Lecter" handwriting samples on a computer monitor.

TECHNICIAN 2
The letter was written by Lecter, but you could probably tell that just from reading it.

Starling nods. Other images replace the writing analyses: sets of fingerprints.

TECHNICIAN 2
Naturally, there were several prints on the envelope, including yours -

STARLING
- sorry -

TECHNICIAN 2
On the letter itself there's only one "partial" - here - not enough to hold up in court, but -

STARLING
We know it's him. Where he was when he wrote it is what I need.

The image changes again - a greatly magnified patch of the letter that reads, "screaming lambs."

TECHNICIAN 2
The paper isn't going help. Yes, it's linen fiber. Yes, it's on the expensive side. No, it's not so rare that you couldn't find it in a thousand stationery stores the world over.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TECHNICIAN 2 (CONT'D)
Same with the ink. Same with the wax.
(*an image of the envelope appears on the monitor*)
The post mark. Las Vegas. You could check it out, but odds are it came from a re-mailing service. Afraid you're out of luck.

STARLING
What about the crease?

TECHNICIAN 2
The what?

INT. PERFUMERY - NEW JERSEY - DAY

Stainless steel tweezers pluck the letter from the evidence bag and hold it, crease up, under an enormous nose. The nose sniffs only once, but long, taking in a faint, pleasant aroma of residue and a lot of air.

The hand clutching the tweezers clutching the letter are passed to another - feminine - hand, which holds it up to another enormous nose with wide nostrils. This nose sniffs once and hands the tweezers to another - masculine - hand. This one lifts the letter to the biggest nose of all.

BIGGEST NOSE
Hand soap ... Raw ambergris base ... Tennessee lavender ... mountain sage ... trace of something else ...

LESS BIGGEST NOSE
Fleece.

LEAST BIGGEST NOSE
Fleece.

BIGGEST NOSE
It's *fleece*, isn't it. Lovely.

The other two "perfume engineers" nod. All three, and Starling, are sitting in a sterile laboratory environment.

STARLING
What's ambergris?

BIGGEST NOSE
Ambergris is a whale product. Alas, much as we'd like to, we can't import it. Endangered Species Act.

The other two shake their heads as if to say, What a load of crap that Endangered Species Act is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Where isn't it illegal?

BIGGEST NOSE
Japan, of course. Couple of places in Europe. You'd almost certainly find it somewhere in Paris. Rome. Amsterdam.

LESS BIGGEST NOSE
Maybe London.

LEAST BIGGEST NOSE
But not at Harrod's. Small, exclusive shops. This bouquet was hand-engineered to someone's specifications.

STARLING
Is there any way of knowing *which* shops?

BIGGEST NOSE
Of course. We'll give you a list. It'll be short.

The Biggest Nose can't resist taking one last savoring sniff before returning the letter to the plastic bag.

EXT. FLORENCE - DAY

Vespas, Fiats and Innocenti speed around a traffic circle. Pedestrians move along the boulevard. We follow one man who seems vaguely familiar - we glimpsed him briefly several days ago walking past Fell's residence just before we went in, and once before that, if we recall, polishing the floor in the Palazzo Vecchio.

Right now, though, we're more interested in Pazzi who joins the frame coming toward us, and we follow him instead, to and up the steps of the Questura building.

INT. QUESTURA - DAY

A black and white step-framed image of Dr. Fell entering a small perfume shop. It plays on a monitor sitting atop two VCR decks, one on *Play*, the other *Record*, the operator, a young agent, smoking as he writes out a label.

Pazzi hangs his coat on a rack, crosses through the large room, and sits at his desk which happens to be right next to the VCR, which he pays no attention to. At the next desk, Ricci sits working on a crossword puzzle.

PAZZI
I need opera tickets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RICCI
(without looking up)
Don't think I have any on me.

PAZZI
It's sold out, whatever it's called.

A couple of Pazzi's colleagues, ones who are *now* working on the *Il Mostro* case instead of him, surrounded by photographs and clippings on the crimes, exchange a look.

DETECTIVE
It's the pretty young wife with the ever-open *beak* who needs opera tickets.

Pazzi glances over at them, not sure he heard right. One sneaks a glance at the other. It's all they can do to keep from laughing. The tape of the customers coming and going at the perfume store continues, but Pazzi doesn't notice.

PAZZI
Botticelli.

DETECTIVE
What?

PAZZI
He arranges his victims like that Botticelli painting. You hadn't noticed?

As Pazzi glances away from them, he catches a glimpse of the monitor, of Fell coming into the perfume shop again. He gets up and the *Il Mostro* detectives, thinking he's coming for them, decide to go out for coffee.

PAZZI
Back that up.

YOUNG AGENT
What? I can't back it up. I'm making a copy. I'm recording.

The black and white images of customers, most of them women, continue, until Pazzi hits the stop button and spins the jog. The young agent groans, but not *too* loud; Pazzi far outranks him. The image reverses. Pazzi freezes it on one of the step frames that shows Dr. Fell.

PAZZI
What is this?

YOUNG AGENT
Security camera from a perfume shop on Villa Della Scula. FBI through Interpol requested a copy.

PAZZI
Why?

YOUNG AGENT
They didn't say.

PAZZI
They didn't *say*?

YOUNG AGENT
It was actually kind of weird. Like they were making a point of not saying.

Pazzi unpauses it. Watches Fell approach the counter and then wait, it seems, for a long time as the perfumer mixes up some kind of concoction. Money exchanges hands and Fell, with his purchase, leaves.

INT. PAZZI'S APARTMENT - STUDY - NIGHT

As a search engine works, Pazzi glances down at copies of Fell's state work permit and *Permesso di Soggiorno* resting next to the computer. The video cassette is there, too. And the over-night mailer.

The FBI's consumer home page appears on the screen. Pazzi selects the *10 Most Wanted* button and, in a moment, the list - with pictures - is displayed.

The World Trade Center bombing mastermind is #1. Beneath him, nine other, lesser bombers and murderers, none of whom look anything like Fell.

He shifts back to the main page. Selects *Archives*. The 50 Most Wanted list appears - bank robbers and killers and arsonists, all with photos or police sketches, all but one men. He scrolls down, stops. Dr. Fell - *Hannibal Lecter - "Hannibal the Cannibal"* - is looking right at him.

ALLEGRA
Rinaldo.

He doesn't seem to hear her as he begins reading the text under Lecter's digitally-enhanced picture.

ALLEGRA
Rinaldo.

CONTINUED:

He glances up finally. His young wife - who is indeed pretty - stands in the doorway of the study.

PAZZI
I'm sorry.

ALLEGRA
Are we going to the Teatro Michahelles? *

PAZZI
Yes.

ALLEGRA
You got tickets.

PAZZI
No. But I will. In fact, I was just about to look here.
(on the Internet)

ALLEGRA
Please not the third balcony. I *would* like to see it.

PAZZI
Not in the balcony. No matter what the cost.

Unconvinced the promise will hold, she leaves the room.

Pazzi opens his Filofax to the *F* tab, finds a number written under no heading, a code, enters it into his computer and in a moment is taken to the FBI's private VICAP site - Violent Criminal Apprehension Program.

He types in *Lecter* and scans the internal 302 reports that are displayed, many of them prepared by Special Agent Clarice Starling.

He returns to the server screen. Begins a new search. *Hannibal Lecter*. Many of the same sites Starling found are listed, the ones posted by nuts.

He scrolls down to the *Refine Search* panel. Adds one word to his *Hannibal Lecter* query. *Reward*. Hits *Return*.

Only one site includes the word in its page name. Pazzi goes to it. No graphics other than the same picture the FBI site showed. No indication of whose site it is.

Dry text describes Lecter, reminds the reader he should be regarded as armed and dangerous, and encourages informants to call the provided FBI number with any information.

CONTINUED: (2)

There is also a private number listed - European dialing code, not U.S. Oh, and one more small piece of information. The reward. *$3,000,000.*

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - DAY

The place is looking more and more like a museum, the bulletin and blackboards covered now with notes and newsprint photos, including some of *Il Mostro's* young victims.

Paul Krendler makes his way through the right-angled passageway leading into the darkened room. The only light is coming from a monitor showing Lecter's escape from Memphis, as caught by high-angle security cameras.

He considers a display Starling has erected to Lecter's nine known victims. One is Mason Verger. Another, a man attached to a tool shop peg board with metal rods piercing his body as in an illustration next to it of the medieval *Wound Man.*

He becomes intrigued by a sketch on a standing easel of Starling, signed by Hannibal Lecter. A piece of cloth has been tacked at the neck and drapes down like a sari. *Is she naked underneath it?* Krendler has to find out. As he carefully lifts the cloth -

LECTER'S VOICE
What is your worst memory of childhood?

He jumps, startled, sees Starling sitting in a corner, in the shadows, next to the cassette deck.

STARLING
Can I help you, Mr. Krendler?

KRENDLER
Jesus. What are you doing sitting there in the dark?

STARLING
Thinking.

She gets up. Lets the tape of Lecter's voice continue. Krendler works at slowing the pace of his heart, at regaining most of his unpleasant *hauteur.*

KRENDLER
Some people in Justice are thinking, too. They're thinking, what exactly is she doing about Lecter?

STARLING
Thinking. About cannibalism.

CONTINUED:

KRENDLER
What's the point of that, are you catching a crook, or writing a book? *

STARLING
Aren't *you* curious why he dines on his victims? * *

KRENDLER
Not particularly, no.

STARLING
To show his contempt for those who exasperate him, I think. *

Which she wouldn't mind showing Krendler in similar fashion.

STARLING
Or, sometimes, to perform a public service. In the case of the flautist, Benjamin Raspail -
(shows him a picture)
- he did it to improve the sound of the Baltimore Philharmonic Orchestra, serving the not-so-talented flute player's sweetbreads to the board with a nice Chateau d'Y quem at forty-six hundred dollars a bottle. *That* meal began with green oysters from the Gironde, followed by the sweetbreads, a sorbet and then, you can read here in *Town & Country*: *A notable dark and glossy ragout, the constituents never determined, on saffron rice. Its taste was darkly thrilling with great bass tones that only the vast and careful reduction of the* fond *can give.*

Krendler is looking at *her*, not at the magazine. Then -

KRENDLER
I always figured him for a queer.

STARLING
Now why would you say that, Paul?

KRENDLER
All this artsy-fartsy stuff. Chamber music and tea-party food. Not that I mean anything *personal*, if you've got a lot of sympathy for those people.

CONTINUED: (2)

There wasn't a lot of spin on his words, but they carried an inkling of implication which she doesn't misinterpret. She ignores it, though, and him, looks through her receipts.

KRENDLER
What I came here to impress upon you, Starling, is I'd better see cooperation. There are no little fiefdoms. I want to be copied on every 302. Work with me and your so-called career here might improve. If you don't, all I have to do is draw a line *through* your name rather than under it, and it's over.

He turns to leave.

STARLING
Paul? What is it with you? I told you to go home to your wife. That was wrong?

KRENDLER
Don't flatter yourself, Starling. Why would I hold that against you? That was a long time ago, and besides, this town is full of cornpone country pussy.

He seems pleased he came up with the phrase so easily.

KRENDLER
That said, I wouldn't *mind* having a go with you now if you want to reconsider.

STARLING
In the gym, anytime. No pads.

He smiles. Leaves. She sits down at her desk, listens to his footsteps down the hall fade, glances at the tape of Lecter's escape.

EXT. FLORENCE - DAY

A fistful of 1,000-lira coins makes a dull *ching* as Pazzi shakes them in his hand like dice he's not sure he wants to throw. He's staring at a pay phone ten paces away. No one's using it. It's his if he wants it; clearly he isn't sure.

He finally walks over to it. Lifts the receiver. Presses in the sequence of numbers scribbled in pen on the back of the hand that holds the change.

A series of long distance tones beeps like a tinny death knell. A tinny recorded voice tells him to deposit 9,000 lira for the first three minutes.

CONTINUED:

He drops nine coins in the slot with a shaky hand. The call connects and another recorded voice tells him the number he has dialed *is no longer in service.*

He hangs up, *relieved.* Begins to walk away with his so-called reputation intact. The phone rings. He looks back at it. It rings again. He begins to walk toward it. It rings again. He reaches for it, hesitates, picks it up, and hears a voice - not recorded - American accent - a man.

VOICE
Yes?
(Pazzi doesn't answer)
Hel-*lo*?

PAZZI
I have information about Hannibal Lecter.

VOICE
Does it include where he is now?

PAZZI
Is the reward still in effect?

VOICE
Yes, it is. Have you shared your information with the police, sir?

PAZZI
No.

VOICE
I'm required to encourage you to do so.

PAZZI
Uh-huh. Is the reward payable under ... special circumstances?

VOICE
Do you mean a bounty? It's against international convention and U.S. Law to offer a bounty for someone's death, sir.

PAZZI
I mean in the case of, say, someone who might not ordinarily be eligible to accept a reward.

VOICE
May I suggest you contact an attorney, sir, before taking any possibly-illegal action? There's one in Geneva who's excellent in these matters.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VOICE (CONT'D)
May I recommend an attorney? May I give you his toll-free number?

The voice enunciates the number clearly. Pazzi writes it on the back of his hand next to the other one, the pen shaking.

VOICE
Thank you for calling.

The call disconnects. Pazzi takes a breath. Crosses the street to another pay phone. Dials the toll-free number and pockets the coins. The call connects. Another male voice. This one with a dry, Swiss, lawyerly tone:

VOICE 2
Hello -

PAZZI
Yes. I was just speaking with someone who suggested I -

VOICE 2
There is a one hundred thousand dollar advance. To qualify for the advance, a fingerprint must be provided - *in situ* - on an object -
(the voice is a *recording*)
Once the print is positively identified, the balance of the money will be placed in escrow at Geneva Credit Suisse, and may be viewed at any time subject to 24-hour-prior-notification. To repeat this message in French, press 2. In Spanish, press 3. In German, press 4. In Japanese -

INT. CAFE RESTROOM - LATER - DAY

Pazzi scrubs at his hands like Lady Macbeth, trying to get the stain of the phone numbers off his skin, the black ink clouding the water pooling in the sink before going down the drain.

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - DAY

A security tape of mostly-Japanese customer entering and exiting an exclusive Tokyo perfumery plays on Starling's VCR. The mail room boy watches it as Starling speaks on the phone -

STARLING
Is it possible it went out with the regular mail?

CONTINUED:

YOUNG AGENT'S VOICE
No. No, I over-nighted it. I filled out the slip myself.

INT. QUESTURA - INTERCUT

It's the same young agent who copied the security tape -

YOUNG AGENT
This was the day after your request. I did it right away. I don't understand what happened. You should have it.

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - CONTINUED

There are three other tapes, marked with the names of stores in Paris, Rome and Amsterdam, stacked on top of the machine that plays the Japanese perfumery. *

STARLING
I don't. Can you send me another one?

YOUNG AGENT'S VOICE
I'll have to *make* another one.

STARLING
I'd appreciate it.

She hangs up. Geoffrey gestures to the monitor. *

GEOFFREY *
Nothing, huh? *

STARLING *
Nothing yet. Still waiting on Florence and London. London says they're sniffing around. I don't know, is that British humor? *

EXT. PALAZZO CAPPONI - DAY

Pazzi's clean finger presses a button on the intercom set into the stone wall of the entry. As he waits, he glances up at the security camera, then down at the hammered-iron handle on the door. No way to get a print off that.

DR. FELL'S VOICE
Buongiorno.

PAZZI
Dr. Fell? It's Inspector Pazzi.

CONTINUED:

DR. FELL'S VOICE
Yes, I can see.

A buzzer releases the lock and Pazzi pulls the door open.

INT. PALAZZO CAPPONI - DAY

As Fell leads Pazzi across the main salon upstairs, past furniture drapes with sheets, the inspector's glance darts from object to object he'd like to steal for prints - a glass, a book, a vase, a pen.

DR. FELL
I should've encouraged you to bring someone along. The cases, I'm afraid, are on the heavy side.

PAZZI
Maybe you could help me with them.

DR. FELL
Hmmmm.

PAZZI
Just down the stairs I mean.

They reach two big suitcases, closed. Two typewritten sheets of paper rest on a small table next to them.

PAZZI
Is that the inventory?

DR. FELL
Yes.

PAZZI
May I see it?

DR. FELL
Of course.

Pazzi waits for Fell to *hand* it to him. Unfortunately, it's just as close to him. Once it's clear Fell has no intention of picking it up, Pazzi does - carefully but not *too* carefully - and pretends to read it.

DR. FELL
You are a Pazzi of the Pazzi, I think.
(Pazzi doesn't answer)
Wasn't it at the Palazzo Vecchio your ancestor was hanged? Francesco de'Pazzi?
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

DR. FELL (CONT'D)
Thrown naked with a noose around his neck from the window? Writhing alongside the archbishop against the cold stone wall?

Pazzi stares at Fell, who only pleasantly smiles back.

DR. FELL
I found a nice rendering of it here in the library the other day. If you'd like perhaps I could sneak it out for you.

PAZZI
I'd think that might jeopardize your chances for permanent appointment to the curatorship.

DR. FELL
Only if you told.
(Fell smiles again)
Remind me. What was his crime?

PAZZI
He was accused of killing Giuliano de'Medici.

DR. FELL
Unjustly?

PAZZI
No, I don't think so.

DR. FELL
Then he wasn't just *accused*. He did it. He was guilty.

A knowing look from Fell makes Pazzi wonder if he somehow knows he knows he's Lecter.

DR. FELL
I'd think that would make living in Florence with the name Pazzi uncomfortable, even 500 years later.

PAZZI
Not really. In fact, I can't remember the last time - before today - someone brought it up.

DR. FELL
But people don't always *tell* you what they're thinking ... They just see to it you don't *advance*.
(then)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. FELL (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, I *too* often say what I'm thinking. I'll be *right* back to help you.

Fell leaves Pazzi alone in the room ...

FELL'S VOICE
Any developments in the Il Mostro case?

PAZZI
I believe my colleagues are checking suspects' homes to see if they have any Botticelli prints.

FELL'S VOICE
In their homes? That would be rather obvious, wouldn't it?

PAZZI
Serial killers *are* obvious. Their primary *motivation* is to be obvious, to be noticed.

FELL'S VOICE
But not *caught*.

In another room, Fell opens a drawer and takes out a pair of leather gloves.

PAZZI'S VOICE
Yes, that too, I think.

DR. FELL
Not really.

PAZZI'S VOICE
Yes.

FELL'S VOICE
Hmmm.

In the salon, Pazzi peers closely at the handles of the suitcases to see if he can tell which, if either, has the better print. It doesn't matter really; in a few moments he'll get another, fresh one.

FELL'S VOICE
By the way, the room your standing in was built in the 15th-century.

PAZZI
It's beautiful.

CONTINUED: (3)

FELL'S VOICE
Yes. Unfortunately, I think the heating system was installed just about the same time.

Fell reappears pulling on the gloves. Elaborating a shiver, he rubs them together.

FELL
All right, let's drag these things down. They're as heavy as bodies.

EXT/INT. PERFUMERY - DAY

From across the street, Pazzi watches Fell inside the small shop browsing at the glass bottles that line the shelves, his ungloved hands clasped behind his back like someone looking at great art, his nose taking in the cacophony of scents.

The hands unclasp. A finger reaches to a bottle - but doesn't touch it - moving slowly back and forth an inch away from the label as a reading aid. The hands return then to their clasped position behind the back.

EXT. CAFE - LATER

Fell, alone at a table, his hand grasping a wine glass firmly, bringing it to his lips, and setting it back down. Pazzi, watching from across the street, smiles ... until Fell takes a last sip, touches a napkin to his lips, slides the cloth across the glass in a single, mechanical motion, gets up and leaves.

INT JEWELRY STORE - DAY

Pazzi's hands peel tens of thousands of lira from his money clip as a jeweler's hands rub a soft cloth at the blank face of a silver ID bracelet.

JEWELER
What would you like engraved on it, sir?

PAZZI
Nothing.

JEWELER
May I apply an anti-tarnish coating?

PAZZI
No.

EXT. ROAD TO PRATO - DAY

Sollicciano, the dreaded Florentine jail.

INT. JAIL - WOMEN'S DIVISION - DAY

A young woman's eyes drift down from Pazzi's tie clasp, to his wedding band, to his silver ID bracelet. In a crowd on the street, she could remove all three in an instant and he wouldn't even notice they were gone until he got home.

ROMULA
What do you what? Information?

PAZZI
What sort of information would you be willing to give me, Romula? Names and descriptions of fifteen Gypsy pickpockets who never existed? No, what I want is to get you out of here. And to make your arrest record permanently disappear. In exchange, all I want *from you* is the usual thing. Only I want you to fail.

EXT. FELL'S RESIDENCE - DAY

Fell emerges from his residence with a cloth shopping bag. As he walks away on the cobblestoned street, a Vespa - with Pazzi driving and Romula holding him around the waist - races past and disappears into the traffic.

EXT. VERA DAL 1926 - LATER

Pazzi and Romula, on the parked scooter, watch Fell inside the exclusive food shop selecting figs and white truffles.

PAZZI
When you fumble for his wallet, he'll catch you by the wrist -

ROMULA
I've done this a few times, Inspector -

PAZZI
Not like this. If there isn't a clean print on that bracelet -
(on *her* wrist now)
- it's back to Sollicciano.

ROMULA
If there's a problem and someone helps, don't hurt him.
(MORE)

CONTINUED:

ROMULA (CONT'D)
My friend doesn't know anything, and won't take anything, let him run off.

PAZZI
There won't be a problem. The man can't afford a problem. He'll want to get away from you more than you will from him.

Here he comes, out the door of the shop, the little bell above it tinkling. Pazzi waits a moment, then starts the Vespa, puts it in gear. As he blends in among cars racing past Fell, the sound of a choir practicing - somewhere- begins and carries over:

INT. CHURCH OF SAN CROCE - LATER

Tourists drop 200-lira pieces into coin boxes that trigger light to be thrown across the great frescos of Christ. The clicking timers wind down after only a few moments and the murals plunge back into incense-smoky darkness.

Pazzi, lurking in the vast cathedral by Galileo's grave, points with his chin to a transept to the left of the main altar. There, Romula can see the kneeling shape of a lone figure and the outline of his shopping bag.

Fell has brought along his art supplies and uses some now to carefully make a charcoal rubbing of an inscription in the stone. To keep his hands clean, he wears a pair of thin cotton gloves.

A bell sounds. Midday closing. Sextons coming out with their keys to empty the coin boxes. Tourists looking around puzzled in the dark, not yet understanding they all have to leave. Pazzi watches Fell rise from his labors, carefully place the charcoal rubbing in his shopping bag and pull the gloves off.

PAZZI
(a whisper)
Okay?

She nods, moves away to the entrance of the church. The crowd will force Fell to pass right by her here. Troubled by something, though - a feeling - she looks down. Sees she's standing on the tomb of Michelangelo. Steps off and whispers to the slab -

ROMULA
Sorry.

Fell is coming toward her in the dark, oblivious to what is about to happen. Someone reaches into a purse and fishes out a 200-lira coin.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Romula begins to move toward the dark shape moving toward her. Her friend and protector, Gnocco, falls in a couple steps behind her. A hand drops the coin in a slot.

Just as Romula and her target are upon one another, a light goes on illuminating a fresco of a bloodied Christ *and* Fell's eyes, looking straight into hers and chilling her heart. The ticking of the coin box accompanies an awkward moment before Romula manages -

ROMULA
Excuse me.

She continues past Fell, the bracelet - untouched - jangling dully on her wrist. Fell looks back over his shoulder at the woman. She looks back over hers for a second, and the light goes out leaving him in silhouette.

Fell walks away out past the doors and into the blinding sunlight. Pazzi wanders around in the dark and finally finds Romula at a font, scrubbing at her hands in the holy water.

ROMULA
That's the Devil.

She takes the bracelet off and hands it to Pazzi. He watches water drip from it and his hands to the floor.

PAZZI
So I'll drive you back to jail then.

ROMULA
Yes.

She *splashes* holy water on her face. Pazzi shakes his head and glances away, watches absently as a sexton empties one of the coin boxes, then notices Gnocco, standing in the shadows.

EXT. PIAZZA SANTO SPIRITO - NIGHT

The dark water of the Arno drifts slowly under a bridge. On the left bank, by the fountain, Gnocco and some other Gypsies share a joint. In between hits, Gnocco slices up an orange, his eyes hazy but his hand quick with the blade, the juice of the fruit dripping onto his fingers.

GNOCCO
Two million lire.

PAZZI
Fine.

GNOCCO
Give me the bracelet.

CONTINUED:

PAZZI
Wash your fuckin hands.

EXT. VIA SAN LEONARDO - NIGHT

Steep cobbled ill-lit street. Gnocco leaning in a dark, gated niche built into a high stone wall protecting villas inside. He finishes a joint, tosses it away. Spits on the bracelet and wipes it clean with the tail of his shirt. As he's about to put it on his wrist, his jacket vibrates. With his free hand he removes a cell phone from the pocket.

PAZZI'S VOICE
He's coming.

The call disconnects. Gnocco slips the phone back into the pocket, clasps the bracelet around his wrist and steps out of the shadows.

Several people appear around the corner, all of them well-dressed. A show must have just let out. Gnocco walks up the narrow street toward the column of advancing bobbing heads, keeping his eyes on one of them. Fell.

Gnocco and the group are upon each other. Stoned and swimming against the current, the pickpocket angles toward his mark, bumps into him, reaches inside the elegant coat, feels the wrist with the bracelet seized in a terrific grip, twists it free hardly breaking stride, and emerges from the tail of the throng.

He veers into another dark niche and bends over slightly to catch his breath. In a moment, quick footsteps announce Pazzi's arrival.

GNOCCO
I got it. He grabbed me just right. Tried to hit me in the *balls*, but he missed.

He holds out the arm with the bracelet for Pazzi to take it off. As the Inspector works carefully at the clasp, Gnocco sucks in another deep breath of air.

GNOCCO
Jesus -

PAZZI
What - ?

Gnocco suddenly collapses to one knee, the bracelet pulling from Pazzi's hands. Blood begins to gush out of a neat tear in his pants.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

More confused than in pain, Gnocco looks down at the blood only to have it spray up into his face. Trying to ignore the blood - even as it sprays on *him* - Pazzi works to get the bracelet off, and finally frees it.

Gnocco stares dumbly at himself in his praying position, then tries to stop the flow of blood with his hand. As he collapses against the iron gate. Pazzi sets the bracelet in the box it came in, pockets it, then reaches into Gnocco's bloody pocket and takes the phone.

PAZZI
Here, let me help you.

Gnocco looks up at Pazzi gratefully, feels his hand being moved away from the wound and held, feels nothing pressed in its place, feels his blood draining out of his body, then feels nothing. He's dead.

Pazzi gets up. Takes out a handkerchief. Wrapped inside is a used syringe. He tosses it on the ground and walks away.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - DAY

Verger, lying in the dark, watches a technician in a pool of bright light in the sitting area using a cordless power screwdriver to back out the screws that secure the bracelet to the jeweler's stand. Carefully, he lifts it out of the velvet box and sets it on a china plate.

A few flecks of dried blood fall onto the porcelain. More dried blood encrusts the silver. He dusts the bracelet with Dragon's Blood powder, angles a hot lamp at it and photographs the one - *in situ* - print.

He comes around the tripod then and lifts the print, tapes it to a slide and compares it to Lecter's FBI print card under a microscope. The swirling lines come into sharp focus.

TECHNICIAN
Middle finger of the left hand. Sixteen point match.

EXT. SARDINIA - DAY

On a mountain farm deep in central Sardinia, a young man wheels an empty, battered metal gurney along the fence-line of a large pen.

Inside the adjacent shed, another young man picks through a pile of old clothes. In a corner, a third young man shuffles through a small handful of audio cassette tapes.

CONTINUED:

Carlo and his gurney arrive. His brother Matteo has chosen an ensemble of pants and shirt, and lays it out on the sheet. Carlos's cell phone rings. He flips it open.

MASON'S VOICE
Carlo?

CARLO
Mason?

MASON'S VOICE
Ciao, Bello. Come stai? You have all your shots? There's a nasty winter flu going around.

CARLO
Am I coming to see you?

MASON'S VOICE
Soon, I think, but first I need you to pack off the boys. Yes, I know, the day you never thought would arrive, has. Got a pencil?

Carlo grabs a pen and a scrap of paper from the trestle table by the gurney, where his brother is now filling the clothes with meat and acorns and entrails and bread.

MASON'S VOICE
You need to get certified cholera inoculations - well, not you - and Ace-promazine for sedation. That's a-c-e-p-r-oh, the hell with it, you'll find it. Cordell will fax the Veterinary Service forms directly to Animal and Plant Health - but you need to get the veterinary affidavits from Sardinia.

As Carlo scribbles the shipping instructions, Piero decides on a tape, drops it in and carries the boom box outside.

MASON'S VOICE
The airbus will await you in Cagliari. Count Fleet Airlines. The crates can be no larger than four-by-six - it's as bad as carry-on rules. An on-board inspector has to travel with them. They'll be met at Baltimore-Washington Airport - not the Key West quarantine facility - by my people who will clear them through Customs. Va bene?

CONTINUED: (2)

CARLO
Got it.

MASON'S VOICE
How are they?

CARLO
They're really big, Mason. About two hundred and seventy kilos.

MASON'S VOICE
Wow.

Someone starts screaming outside; a recorded male voice from the boom box. Matteo splashes some expensive cologne on the stuffed clothes and wheels the gurney out.

MASON'S VOICE
Oh, I called at a good time. I can hear that. Would it be too much trouble to take the phone outside?

Carlo walks out to the pen with the phone. Matteo is there, lowering the gurney while Piero raises the volume on the boom box. The recorded screams echo out across the mountains - a fitting overture for the dark shadows coming out of the woods.

EXT. BANK - GENEVA - DAY

The unassuming facade of Geneva Credit Suisse.

INT. CREDIT SUISSE VAULT - DAY

A bank clerk and another man, both in business suits, work their keys to open four deep lock boxes with brass plates.

INT. ADJACENT PRIVACY ROOM - DAY

Alone in this severe, scrubbed, *very* Swiss room, Pazzi can hear the sound of wheels. In a moment a cart with four large metal deposit boxes is pushed in.

The clerk excuses himself. The other man raises the lids of the boxes revealing three hundred banded blocks of non-sequential hundred dollar bills.

Pazzi watches the man tear the paper bands off ten of the neat stacks and set the loose bills in a counting machine. The numbers on the LCD display climb.

CONTINUED:

MR. KONIE
The full balance of the money is payable upon receipt of the doctor alive.
(the same dry Swiss voice Pazzi heard on the phone recording)
Of course, you won't have to seize him yourself, but merely point him out to us. In fact, it's preferable to all concerned if that's the extent of your involvement from this point.

PAZZI
I *prefer* to stay involved. To make sure things go right.

MR. KONIE
Professionals will see to that, sir.

PAZZI
I'm a professional.

The glowing LCD display stops at $100,000.

INT. FLORENCE PERFUMERY - DAY

Flushed with the feeling that one of the bundles of money makes against his thigh, Pazzi enters the exclusive shop and browses at the bottles of scents on the shelves.

PERFUMER
May I help you, sir?

PAZZI
Yes. Yes, you may.

INT. PAZZI'S APARTMENT - EVENING

An aria can be heard as Allegra Pazzi, sitting at her dressing table in her underclothes, uncaps a small unlabeled bottle of perfume and carefully touches a drop to her wrist.

Across the bedroom, knotting a new tie that drapes against a handmade linen shirt that still shows the fold-creases, Pazzi watches as his wife lifts the wrist to her beautiful face, smells the scent on it and smiles to herself.

Pazzi smiles, too, to himself, as he watches her place another drop on the other wrist and two more just under her diamond-studded ear lobes.

It's almost like watching sex.

INT. TEATRO MICHAHELLES - NIGHT

The aria fills the grand darkened interior of the theatre. In a private box overlooking the stage, Pazzi sits with his wife's hand in his - he in his new Sulka suit, she in her new evening gown. The scalped tickets for *these* seats much have cost him a fortune, but then he can afford it now.

A whiteness down below, caught by the bounce of a stage light, draws Pazzi's attention from the diva. The bright glow belongs to the starched French cuffs of a white dress shirt poking out of dark sleeves, the hands intertwined, the chin resting on them.

It's Dr. Fell, engrossed in the drama, lost in the harrowed beauty of the *prima donna's* voice. But then, the head comes around like an owl's, the eyes peering up to the private box. Pazzi *had* a second of opportunity to look away but missed it, and now their eyes meet.

Pazzi involuntarily squeezes his wife's hand. The pressure draws a loving look from her, but Pazzi's is still locked on Fell's enigmatic little smile, much as he wishes it wasn't, until a crescendo in the music - finally - draws Fell's head and eyes back to the stage. Applause.

EXT. TEATRO PICCOLOMINI - NIGHT

A crush of theatergoers maneuvers for cabs.

DR. FELL
Enjoy the performance, *Commendatore*?

Pazzi and his wife, waiting for a free cab, turn to see Fell standing behind them. He smiles pleasantly.

PAZZI
Very much. Allegra, this is Dr. Fell, Curator of the Capponi Library.

DR. FELL
Curator *protempore*, Signora Pazzi. I'm honored.

Pazzi's eyes follow Fell's hand as it reaches to and holds his wife's, his waist bowing slightly. Allegra smiles at his grace and the graceful tone of his voice.

ALLEGRA
Is that an American accent, doctor?

DR. FELL
Canadian, *wrung* through the eastern seaboard of America.

ALLEGRA
I've always wanted to visit. New England especially.

DR. FELL
Umm. It's nice. I've enjoyed many excellent meals there.

Pazzi would very much enjoy *leaving*, and looks away hoping to see a driver interested in his patronage.

DR. FELL
Did I notice you following the score, Signora? Hardly anyone does it anymore. *
Would this interest you?

From a portfolio under his arm, he produces a hand-copied score on parchment - c. 1688 - each page in a plastic sleeve.

DR. FELL
I've marked in overlay some of the differences from the modern score, which might amuse you. Please take it.

ALLEGRA
Look at this, Rinaldo.

PAZZI
I can see it.

And both of their hands, Fell's and hers, on it. *

ALLEGRA
I did have some trouble with the * recitative at the beginning. *

DR. FELL *
Dante's first sonnet from La Vita Nuova. *
He saw Beatrice Portinari across a chapel *
and he loved her at that instant and for * the rest of his life. But then had a * disturbing dream - *

ALLEGRA *
(reading the text) *
Joyous Love seemed to me, the while * he held my heart in his hands, and in his * arms, My lady lay asleep wrapped in a * veil - *

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. FELL
(continuing from memory)
He woke her then, and trembling and obedient, she ate that burning heart out of his hand. Weeping, I saw him then depart from me.

ALLEGRA
He saw her eat his heart!
(Fell likes that as much as she does)
Do you believe a man could become so obsessed with a woman from a single encounter?

DR. FELL
Could he daily feel a stab of hunger for her? Find nourishment in the very sight of her? *I think so.* But would she see through the bars of *his* plight, and ache for him?

Allegra waits for the answer, but Fell doesn't have it; he just looks away wistfully as his fingers slide away from the plastic like snakes.

ALLEGRA
Thank you for this.

Fell's nod says, *I'm your servant.* Pazzi pulls open the back door of a cab.

DR. FELL
Commendatore.
(as he shakes Pazzi's hand)
A ... lle ... gra ...

It's all Pazzi can do to keep from arresting the man as he watches Fell rape his wife with a kiss of her hand. His head stays down there longer than it should as he savors the aroma emanating from her wrist. Finally the head rises back up and Pazzi all but shovels Allegra into the cab. As Fell watches after it driving away, a couple passes behind him.

THEATERGOER
Let's get something to eat.

DR. FELL
(to himself)
Yes, quite.

The hand that held Allegra's when he kissed it comes up to his face. He takes in the residue of the scent.

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Empty coffee cup and dinner debris on Starling's desk. Sitting at her computer, she types in a code summoning the FBI's private VICAP site. Navigating deep into it with other codes, she reaches a page with a query panel and types in - "cookies."

The screen fills with long lines of text - words and numbers and slashes and hyphens - the "fingerprints" left by everyone who has accessed the site over the last year.

Most have addresses within the FBI itself and Justice Department; the majority of the rest from Interpol and other international police organizations. The scrolling list goes on forever.

She narrows her search to show only those who have visited the VICAP Lecter files, then narrows it further to those who have "knocked" more than twenty times in the last month.

Her own screen name - "cstarling" - appears on the new list more than any other. There are also several flagged hits by "pkrendler." She smiles at one name - "jcrawford." He isn't supposed to be accessing the VICAP files anymore, now that he's retired, but just can't help himself.

The next heaviest user is a name she doesn't recognize. Someone who calls him or herself, "pfrancesco." She stares long at the screen name and finally whispers to it -

STARLING
Could that be you, Doctor?

EXT. CEMETERY - FLORENCE - NIGHT

We slowly approach - from someone's moving point of view - a pair of young lovers walking toward us under the trees. As they draw closer - oblivious to us, and our breath, and our footsteps on the cobblestone path -

Pazzi enters his own POV. Once past the lovers, he takes out a pencil-thin Maglite and rakes its narrow beam across names on the chipped-marble tombstones he passes, the light settling eventually on someone called "Lorenzo Mametti."

He *tosses* a cheap bunch of wilting flowers onto the grave and looks around for whoever it is he's supposed to be meeting here. A shadowy figure emerges almost soundlessly from behind a crypt and Pazzi finds the face with his pen light.

CARLO
Please.

CONTINUED:

Pazzi snaps it off. Carlo comes out into the open looking like a grave digger in his work clothes, perches on a squat headstone and, first offering one to Pazzi, who declines, lights himself a cigarette.

CARLO
I want him in the open street with not a lot of people around.

PAZZI
How will you take him down?

CARLO
That's my business.

PAZZI
It's my business too.

CARLO
You're a cop, aren't you.

PAZZI
I asked you a question.

CARLO
Yeah, you're a cop, all right. I'll stun him with a beanbag gun, net him, give him a shot.

PAZZI
He has to lecture tomorrow night. It won't be strange if I attend; he actually thinks I'm interested. Can you do it that soon?

CARLO
Will you walk with him or are you afraid of him?

PAZZI
I'll do what I'm paid to do and so will you, only I'll be *better* paid for it.

Carlo removes his hat and bows his head as if to pray. Someone is walking on a path intersecting theirs down by the mausoleums. The figure disappears behind the stone walls.

PAZZI
I want him out of Tuscany fast.

CARLO
Believe me, he'll be gone from the face of the *earth* fast. Feet first.

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - DAY

Starling glances from an international number jotted down on her blotter to the phone on which she's dialing it. A paused time-coded frame of Lecter at the Florence perfumery, taking in a scent on his hand, glows on her television as she listens to a European ring.

INT. QUESTURA - SAME TIME - EVENING

Pictures of *Il Mostro's* victims stare at the detective who picks up the ringing phone.

DETECTIVE
Questura. Pandolfini.

STARLING'S VOICE
I'd like to speak with Chief Inspector Rinaldo Pazzi, please. I'm Agent Clarice Starling with the American FBI.

The detective puts her on hold and shouts "Pazzi!" across the room to where Pazzi was just grabbing his coat off the rack to leave. He holds the receiver up, then cradles it. Pazzi groans. Keeps his coat on. Lifts the receiver of another phone near him and pushes the blinking light.

PAZZI
Pazzi.

STARLING'S VOICE
Inspector Pazzi, it's Agent Starling with the FBI. How do you do?

He *was* doing fine until this instant.

INTERCUT him here and Starling in her basement room -

PAZZI
Actually I was just leaving for the day, can I call you back tomorrow?

STARLING
This won't take long. I'd appreciate it.

Pazzi groans again to himself as he glances to the clock.

STARLING
I wanted to thank you, first of all, for sending me the security tape from the perfume store.

The security tape? Pazzi *thought* he *buried* that tape.

CONTINUED:

STARLING
When I say you, I mean your department. Agent Benetti. Is he there? Can I speak with him?

Pazzi is looking right at the young man pouring himself a cup of water at the dispenser.

PAZZI
I'm sorry, he's gone home.

STARLING
That's all right. I should tell you this rather than him anyway -

PAZZI
I'm late for an important lec - an important appointment -

STARLING
The person I'm looking for, Inspector - who was indeed shown on that tape - is Hannibal Lecter.

PAZZI
Who?

STARLING
Dr. Hannibal Lecter. You've never heard of him? He's quite well-known, at least in America.

PAZZI
I'm sorry, I'm not familiar -

STARLING
And the tape confirms that he is - or was recently - in Florence.

PAZZI
Really.

STARLING
He's a very dangerous man, Inspector Pazzi. He's killed nine people - that we know of.

PAZZI
We know about dangerous men around here, too, unfortunately.

STARLING
Il Mostro.

CONTINUED: (2)

PAZZI
Yes.
(pause)
You don't think -

STARLING
No, I don't. The crimes of *Il Mostro* bear *no* resemblance to Lecter's in ... in style.

PAZZI
I really have to go, Miss -

STARLING
Starling. Just another minute. Are you sure you've never heard of him?

PAZZI
I haven't -

STARLING
Because I'm confused. I'm confused by that because someone there has been accessing our private VICAP files on Dr. Lecter with some regularity, on your computer.

PAZZI
Everybody uses everybody's computer here. Maybe one of the detectives on *Il Mostro* was looking at profiles of killers to -

STARLING
I'm speaking about the computer at your *home*, sir.

Silence on both ends of the line. A printout on her desk shows the Internet trail. Scribbled on a Post-It stuck to it is "*pfrancesco = rinaldo pazzi.*"

STARLING
You're trying to catch him yourself, aren't you, Inspector? For the reward. I cannot warn you strongly enough against that. He killed three policemen down in Memphis, *while* he was in custody, tearing the *face* off one of them - and he will kill you too if you -

He hangs up on her.

EXT/INT. PALAZZO VECCHIO - LATER - EVENING

As the sky darkens, floodlights across the piazza blink on and wash across the rough stone walls of the Palazzo Vecchio. As bats fly out from the jack-o'-lantern teeth of the parapets the image suddenly goes to -

BLACK AND WHITE - a security monitor in the foyer, on which a guard watches the creatures circling the building looking for darker quarters.

A clunking sound draws our attention, but not his, to the stairs, where we briefly glimpse the bottom half of a hand truck - with something big strapped to it - as it's pulled with some effort up the top steps.

UPPER HALL

The hand truck is wheeling toward us now, along the long hall, and we see that it is a lectern - as big as a pulpit - strapped to it. We watch it coming, and the worker pushing it - that same man again, the Palazzo's custodian - into -

THE SALON OF LILIES

- where the restorers are climbing down from their scaffolding, closing up their cans of spirits and paints, packing up to leave for the day.

Metal folding chairs have been arranged on the drop cloths covering the floor in split rows of six. Fell is at a small table in back of them, setting up a slide projector. He turns it on and angles its bright white light onto a home movie screen draping off the arm of its metal stand.

He sees the custodian coming in with the hand truck and points out to him that he'd like the lectern up front, to one side of the screen.

The screen. It's too small. The projector light spilling way wide of its edges. The drop cloth hanging from the scaffolding behind it would work much better.

As the custodian unstraps and sets up the lectern, Fell takes down the little screen, sets it aside, and stands before the cloth, smoothing at its flickering folds.

The last of the restorers straggles out. The custodian unplugs and coils the long orange cord of the floor polisher, hand-over-elbow. Fell adds a brown extension cord to the projector remote and snakes it along the ersatz aisle between the chairs to the lectern.

(CONTINUED)

He sets some books on the podium, places his hands on its sides to test the comfort of its height - it's satisfactory - and looks out over his invisible audience.

The custodian is finished straightening up. Fell watches him cross behind the back row of folding chairs, approach the open doorway, and pause for a few moments - too *many* moments - to gaze up at the Botticelli before leaving.

EXT. PALAZZO VECCHIO - NIGHT

A great shadow rears up against the floodlit wall. It belongs to Pazzi, as he crosses the piazza, glancing once to Carlo and his brother Matteo smoking next to a van before disappearing into the palazzo's front entrance.

FELL'S VOICE
Avarice and hanging are linked in the medieval mind -

INT. SALON OF LILIES - NIGHT

The "dragons" of the *Studiolo* - and Sogliato - face us in the folding chairs, listening to the lecture -

FELL'S VOICE
St. Jerome writes that Judas' very surname - Iscariot - means 'money,' or 'price.'

A ringing phone interrupts. The heads all turn. Pazzi, standing just inside the doors, gropes for his cell phone, extracts it from his jacket pocket.

FELL
Ah, *Commendatore* Pazzi.

STARLING'S VOICE
It wasn't easy, but I got this number *without* telling them why, Inspector Paz -

He hangs up on her. Switches off the phone's power.

PAZZI
Sorry.

FELL
Not at all. Welcome. Since you are closest to the lights, would you be so kind as to *dim* the lights?

Pazzi twists a dimmer on the wall and the lights come down.

CONTINUED:

FELL
Thank you. You'll be interested in this, *Commendatore*, since there is a Pazzi already in Dante's *Inferno*.

An art slide appears on the drop cloth. Fell improves the focus with the remote.

FELL
Here is the earliest known depiction of the Crucifixion, carved on an ivory box in Gaul about A.D. Four Hundred. It includes the death by hanging of Judas, his face upturned to the branch that suspends him.
(the slide changes)
And here he is, on the doors of the Benevento Cathedral, hanging with his bowels falling out as St. Luke the physician described him in the Acts of the Apostles - <u>still</u> looking up.

The shadow of a bat flies across the image, but everyone, so accustomed to the occurrence, ignores it.

FELL
In this plate, from a fifteenth-century edition of the Inferno, Pier della Vigna's body hangs from a bleeding tree. I will not belabor the obvious parallel with Judas Iscariot.

Pazzi, still in the back of the room, tries desperately to separate the legs of a folding chair without having them squeak.

FELL
But Dante Alighieri needed no drawn illustration. It is his genius to make Pier della Vigna, now in Hell, speak in strained hisses and coughing sibilants as though he is hanging still. Listen as he drags with the other damned his own dead body to hang upon the thorn tree:

Fell's normally composed face pains as he recites from memory Dante's words of the agonal Pier della Vigna -

FELL
Come l'altre verrem per nostre spoglie,
ma no pero ch'alcuna sen rivesta, che non
e giusto aver cio ch'om si toglie.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

FELL (CONT'D)
Qui le strascineremo, e per la mesta
selva saranno i nostri corpi appesi,
ciascuno al prun de l'ombra sua molesta.

A single metallic squeak from the back of the room punctuates the last word.

FELL
Avarice, hanging, self-destruction, with avarice counting as self-destruction as much as hanging. And what does the anonymous Florentine suicide say in his torment at the end of the canto?
(pained)
Io fei gibetto a me de le mie case.
I - I make my own house be my gallows.
(pause)
Thank you for your kind attention.

Now there are, gratefully, a lot of chair squeaks as the scholars stand to applaud Fell and come around him to shake his hand. Pazzi has to step aside to keep from being knocked over by Sogliato leaving.

The lights stay dimmed. Pazzi makes his way to Fell and waits, as an autograph-seeker waits, for the last of the fans to shake the doctor's hand and step away.

PAZZI
I'm not a scholar, but I think you've got the job. Can I buy you a celebratory drink?

FELL
How kind of you. Yes, I'd like that. I'll just be a minute gathering my things.

As Fell takes his tomes from the lectern and carries them back to the projector table, Pazzi switches the power back on his cell phone. Nothing happens. He realizes he has pressed the ring/vibrate, not the power button, powers it up now and makes a call.

PAZZI
Allegra, cara, I'll be home just a little later than I said. I'm taking Dr. Fell out for a drink.

INTERCUT Carlo, outside, watching the entry of the Palazzo.

CARLO
I can see the people coming out now.

CONTINUED: (3)

Back in the Salon, Pazzi hangs up. Fell gathers his slides.

FELL
Oh, I should've shown them this one. I can't imagine how I missed it. This one will interest you.

He drops the slide in front of the projector bulb and the image appears on the drop cloth: a drawing of a man hanging naked beneath the battlements of this palace, the Palazzo Vecchio, from the exact same angle we saw on the security monitor.

FELL
Can you make it out all right?

It's a little blurry but Fell works with the remote and the illustration passes back and forth across the plane of focus. Keeping the remote in one hand, he takes a rag from his satchel with the other, and approaches Pazzi, his silhouette against on the drop cloth looming large as he comes.

FELL
There's a name down here, can you see it?

Pazzi comes close to look. The projector's focusing motor purrs as Fell works it with the remote. The lettering sharpens: *Francesco Pazzi.* Cheerfully -

FELL
It's your ancestor, *Commendatore.* Hanging beneath these very windows. On a related subject, I must confess to you I'm giving serious thought to eating your wife.

He pulls at the heavy drop cloth. It comes down, enveloping Pazzi. Fell seizes him around the chest and presses the ether-soaked rag over the canvas where Pazzi's face must be - the image of his hanging ancestor splashed across the wall under the scaffolding.

EXT. PALAZZO VECCHIO - NIGHT

At the back of the van, its doors open, Carlo unzips a black vinyl guitar gig-bag. Inside is his beanbag stun rifle. He sets it next to the case and leans past the side of the door to check on his brother, Matteo, stationed across the piazza at the far end of the palazzo.

From Matteo's position - if he were looking - he could see that his brother Carlo would like him to pay attention.

CONTINUED:

Matteo *is* paying attention, only it's to a young couple in a car parked in the shadows across the street, necking.

A *rock* hits Matteo's pant leg and he finally looks up to his brother by the van, who is saying with the arm that threw the rock, *What's the matter with you?*

Neither one of them pays any attention to the worker sitting on the ledge of the fountain - the custodian from the Palazzo Vecchio - who glances up from time to time from the tip of his burning cigarette to the young lovers in the car.

INT. SALON OF LILIES - NIGHT

Pazzi's gun, his plastic handcuff strips and his wallet sit next to Fell's work permit and *permesso di soggiorno* on the podium.

Fell himself is standing next to it, working the plug-end of the long orange floor polisher cord into a hangman's noose with the traditional thirteen wraps. Finishing, he crosses the room with it, the tail of the orange snake uncurling and slithering after him.

FELL
If you tell me what I need to know, *Commendatore*, it would be convenient for me to leave without my meal. I'll ask you the questions and then we'll see.

Pazzi is cinched to the hand truck with the same canvas straps used to secure the lectern on it journey up to the salon. With his mouth taped, it's difficult for him to express his gratitude.

FELL
Was it Mason Verger you sold me to? Blink twice for yes. Yes. Thank you. Are his men waiting outside? Umm hmmm. And one of them smells like tainted boar sausage? Was that a single blink? Oh, now you're confused. Try not to be confused or I may have to fillet Signora Pazzi after all. Have you told anyone in the Questura about me? No, I thought not. Have you told A-lle-gra? No. You're sure? I believe you.

Fell comes around behind Pazzi to the back of the hand truck, hooks the cord-noose around one of its handles and gently tips it back.

FELL
Here we go. Hold on.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pazzi struggles against the straps. He struggles to speak, to beg, but all that comes past the tape over his mouth is a purr. Fell wheels him close to a balcony, fully uprights the hand truck again, takes the noose from the handle, drapes it delicately around Pazzi's neck and tightens the slack.

FELL
Your heart is palpitating. I can see it.

Pazzi's heart is beating so hard the fabric of his jacket is fluttering.

FELL
No. That's not your heart.

Fell slips a hand under the taut lapel as if to extract Pazzi's heart. Instead he finds in there the cell phone. It vibrates silently in Fell's hand.

FELL
Who could that be? Should I answer it?

Why not. Fell flips it open.

FELL
(brightly)
Pronto.

STARLING'S VOICE
I've gone above you, Inspector. I've spoken to your section chief. Someday you'll thank me - or you won't - I don't care - you'll be alive.
(silence)
Inspector Pazzi?

LECTER
I'm afraid I have bad news, Clarice.

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - SAME TIME

Dead silence except for a low rumble from the boiler room. Starling at her desk, like a statue clutching a phone. Finally -

STARLING
Is he dead?

LECTER'S VOICE
You got my note. I hope you liked the hand cream. I had it made especially for you.

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Is he *dead*, Dr. Lecter?

LECTER'S VOICE
Clarice, there's nothing I'd love more in the world than to chat with you. Unfortunately, you've caught me at an awkward moment. Forgive me.

INT. SALON OF LILIES - CONTINUED

Lecter closes up the phone. Switches off the power. Returns it to Pazzi's breast pocket.

LECTER
An old friend.

He glances off with the faintest hint of wistfulness. The wall behind the scaffolding is still displaying the slide of the *hanging* Francesco Pazzi. Fell looks back to his great-great-great-great-great-cousin.

LECTER
What do you think? Bowels in? Or out, like Cousin Francesco?

Pazzi's eyes blink and blink and blink and blink in terror.

LECTER
Oh, now you *are* confused. I'll decide for you, if you'll permit me.

Flash of a knife as it comes up Pazzi's front. Another swipe as it severs his attachment to the dolly. One push and the railing catches Pazzi at the waist. He goes over it, the orange cord trailing, the ground coming up in a rush, the floor polisher yanked down and sliding across the floor, gathering up the drop cloth and slamming against the railing. Pazzi's neck snaps and his bowels, and phone, spill out.

EXT. PALAZZO VECCHIO - NIGHT

The lovers in the car break their embrace at the sound of the phone clattering to the ground, and stare up into the face of the palazzo custodian - *Il Mostro* - standing just outside the windshield with a big knife in his hand. He runs.

Carlo is running, too, from the van toward the palazzo, yelling to his brother -

CARLO
Cover the back. If he comes out just kill him, cut him.

CONTINUED:

Matteo hurries around back. Carlo jumps the steps three at a time to the front doors as the security guard comes out to see the thing in color that he couldn't quite make out in black and white on his monitor.

INT. SALON OF LILIES - NIGHT

The great doors of the salon stand ajar. Carlo swings his gun around them and onto the projected illustration of the hanging figure on the wall.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Matteo, knife out, stands before the back door of the palazzo. Breathing hard, he reaches slowly for the handle, careful to position himself in a way that will allow the door to act as his shield if it opens. He grasps the handle and pulls. It's locked. As the hand is letting go and coming away, the door suddenly swings open hard into his face -

INT. SALON OF LILIES - NIGHT

Carlo hears the cry coming from the rear of the building. He runs from the salon and down the back stairs, stumbling down them, catching himself, reaching the back door that's standing open.

EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

He emerges from the doorway, leading with his gun, sees his brother on the ground, covered in blood, hurries to him and kneels. Matteo's dead.

EXT. PIAZZA VECCHIO - NIGHT

A crowd is gathering, peering up at the spectacle that is Rinaldo Pazzi swaying slowly back and forth against the stone walls, lit up as if in a stadium under the floodlights.

A motorcycle comes toward the square on a narrow side street. A figure steps out into the glare of its headlight. The cyclist slows to a stop.

LECTER
Young man, if I'm not at the Piazza Bellosquardo in ten minutes, my wife will kill me.

Lecter's gloved hand offers a 50,000-lira note.

MOTORCYCLIST
That's all you want? A ride?

CONTINUED:

LECTER
That's all.

He hands the cyclist the bill and climbs on back, careful not to touch the young man with his hands, lest he get the wrong idea. The Moto-Guzzi turns around and speeds off the way it came, away from the piazza.

FADE TO BLACK

And out of the black materializes -

A BLACK AND WHITE image of Pazzi, small and stark in the floodlights, swinging against the wall of the Palazzo Vecchio.

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - DAY

The event, captured on tape by the security camera across the piazza, copied and sent by the Questura at her request, plays on Starling's VCR setup. As she watches it -

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - DAY

A copy of a copy of the tape - at the same point in the action - plays for Verger. Noticing something - some movement in an upper corner of the frame - he reverse-searches the tape with his remote to look at it again.

The movement belongs to a silhouette of a figure appearing briefly on the balcony above the hanged Pazzi. An arm of the figure rises up and the hand waves - not down to Pazzi - but across to the viewer. Verger freezes the image and studies it for a long moment in silence. Eventually -

MASON
Cordell? To you: Does that look like a wave goodbye? ... Or hello?

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - CONTINUED

Starling's copy of the tape frozen on the same frame. She, too, reverse-searches it and plays the wave again, no doubt wondering the same thing Verger is. Her phone rings.

STARLING
Starling.

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
Don't tell anyone but I'm sitting here watching an mpeg off the VICAP of a man swinging from a rope against a building in Florence.

CONTINUED:

STARLING
It's an electrical cord, Mr. Crawford, and you know you shouldn't be doing that.

INT. CRAWFORD'S OFFICE - MIAMI - SAME TIME

The same image glows on Crawford's computer screen.

CRAWFORD
Ummm, I can't see it that clearly but I *can* see his intestines hanging out. And the figure on the balcony waving. *

INT. STARLING'S LECTEREUM - CONTINUED

She unpauses her better quality tape and the wave plays again.

STARLING
If I was concerned -

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
You *should* be concerned. Where do you think he'll go, now that you've disturbed his comfortable life?

STARLING
Not here. Somewhere *else* he can live without denying himself the things he likes.

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
What does he like?

STARLING
You know. Good food, good wine, music, books -

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
He likes *you*, Starling. Seven years gone, not a trace, and he writes to you. You know what that means. * * *

STARLING
No.

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
The stalker who says he likes you is far more dangerous than the one who says he wants to kill you.

EXT. VERGER'S FARM - DAY

The holes in the side of the livestock truck aren't big enough to see what's inside. The guard at the main entrance, clipboard in hand, jumps back when *something* bangs up against the metal wall of the trailer. To the driver -

GUARD
You have to turn around - or back down - go half a mile up the frontage road to a gate - then up the service road.

As the truck begins to turn around, the guard waves Cordell's car through. Barney is in the passenger seat.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - DAY

A man with glasses and a dry comb-over sits staring into the glare of Verger's bed-lights.

DR. DOEMLING
I don't understand what you think he can offer.

MASON
A second opinion, doctor. I know that's anathema to those in your profession, but it's not in mine.

Cordell leads Barney into the darkened chamber.

MASON
Speak of the devil. Welcome, Barney. I'm Mason. This is Dr. Doemling, who is head of the Baylor University Psychology Department. He holds the Verger Chair. *

BARNEY
How do you do?

Barney sets down a pink dessert box tied with string and offers his hand to the doctor, receiving back for his trouble a limp shake. Peering into the lights he can see beyond them only the vague shape of the figure in the hospital bed. *

MASON
I see you've brought dessert. That's very kind. Cookies? I *might* be able to get a cookie down somehow. So Barney - is Barney your real name by the way? *

BARNEY
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MASON
First of all, Barney, thank you for the wealth of wonderful items you've provided me from your personal Lecter treasure trove. I've enjoyed them immensely.

BARNEY
Thank you for outbidding everyone. Is Mason your real name?

MASON
Oh, yes. Please sit. Yes, beside Dr. Doemling is fine. That's his real name, too. There. Good. Now -

DR. DOEMLING
Barney, if I could ask, what exactly is your professional training?

BARNEY
I have an LPN.

DR. DOEMLING
You're a *licensed practical nurse*.

BARNEY
Yes.

DR. DOEMLING
Good for you.

MASON
Okay, everybody has everybody's real names and credentials now. Except mine. Mine are, well, I'm just very wealthy, aren't I? Okay. Let's begin.

DR. DOEMLING
Barney, while you were working at the state hospital - I assume *not* as licensed practical nurse -

BARNEY
- as an orderly -

DR. DOEMLING
- as an *orderly* - you observed Clarice Starling and Hannibal Lecter interacting.

BARNEY
Interacting?

CONTINUED: (2)

DR. DOEMLING
Talking to one another.

BARNEY
Yes. Yes, it seemed to me they -

DR. DOEMLING
I can see you're eager to justify you're *consulting fee*, but why don't we start with what you *saw*, not what you *thought* about what you saw.

MASON
Barney's smart enough to give us his opinion. Barney, give us your opinion of what you saw. What *was* it between them? *

BARNEY *
Most of the time Dr. Lecter didn't * respond at all to visitors, he would just, for instance, open his eyes long * enough to insult some academic who was there to look him over.
(he looks *Doemling* over)
With Starling, though, he answered her questions. She interested him. She intrigued him. He thought she was charming and amusing.

MASON
Uh-*huh*.

DR. DOEMLING
You can judge what Hannibal Lecter found *amusing*? Just how do you go about that, *Nurse* Barney?

BARNEY
By listening to him laugh, Dr. Dumling.

DR. DOEMLING
*Doem*ling.

BARNEY
Sometimes Dr. Lecter and I would talk when things got quiet enough. About the science courses I was taking and -

DR. DOEMLING
Some kind of mail-order courses in *psychology*?

CONTINUED: (3)

BARNEY
No, sir. I don't consider psychology a science, and neither did Dr. Lecter.

A small laugh from behind the lights.

MASON
And about her? You talked about her?

BARNEY
I can just repeat what he told me about her.

MASON
That's why you're here.

BARNEY
He said things like how she was charming the way a cub is charming - a small cub that will grow up to be a big cat - one that you can't play with later. She had a cub-like earnestness, he said.

MASON
Does she still in your opinion? Have you seen her lately?

BARNEY
Yes, I have, and no, I don't think she does. That quality in her, I think, is gone.

MASON
So Clarice Starling and Hannibal Lecter became ... friendly.

BARNEY
Inside a kind of formal structure, yes.

MASON
And he was fond of her.

BARNEY
Yes.

MASON
Thank you, Barney. Thank you very much for your candor. And keep all those wonderful products coming. Corcell, see that Barney receives a real nice tip.

DR. DOEMLING
Goodbye, Nurse Barney.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

BARNEY
(picking up the pink box)
Mr. Verger -

MASON
The *cookies*. Yes, let's have one.

BARNEY
It's not cookies.

He opens the box. It's the Lecter mask. Verger stares long at it in reverential silence. Finally -

MASON
How much?

BARNEY
Two hundred and fifty. Thousand.

MASON
Cut Barney a check, Cordell. *Now*.

Barney sets the mask on the bed and leaves. Verger hooks a talon-like finger over the wire and holds on. Eventually he comes out of his reverie -

MASON
So what do you think, doctor? Does Lecter want to fuck her or kill her or eat her or what?

DR. DOEMLING
Probably all three, though I wouldn't want to predict in what order.

MASON
Hmmm.

DR. DOEMLING
No matter how Barney might want to romanticize it and try to make it *Beauty and the Beast*, Lecter's object - as you know from personal experience - is always degradation and suffering. He comes in the guise of a mentor - as he did to you - and her - but it's *distress* that excites him. To draw him - if that's the goal - she needs to be distressed. If you want to make her *attractive* to him, let him *see* her distressed. Let the damage he *sees* suggest the damage he could do.

CONTINUED: (5)

MASON
When the fox hears a rabbit scream, he comes *running ... but not to help.*

EXT. VIRGINIA STATE PARK - DAY

A rabbit on a path, staring, listening, hears the footsteps before we do and bounds away back into the woods. Starling appears a moment later, running on the same dirt path through the trees, two or three miles into her five-mile run, working up a sweat.

She hears footsteps before we do, too, and, like the rabbit, bounds off the path. Stopping just off of it, she bends to catch her breath, then picks up a dead branch.

The footsteps and the panting close in. She lets the first running man go past, but grabs the second one, throws him to the ground, straddles him and pushes the branch against his throat. At once calm but firm -

STARLING
Don't say a word.

She needn't warn him; the young man seems too terrified to speak. Starling reaches behind his track suit, pulls out his .38 and, keeping the branch tight against his neck, lets the other runner, who's running back now, know that she has his friend's gun. To him, again very calmly, as he nears -

STARLING
Stop. Catch your breath. Take your gun out very slowly with your left hand, set it on the ground and take five steps away from it.

The second young man does *exactly* as he's told. Then -

STARLING
All right. Who are you?

2ND RUNNER
We work for Jack Crawford. We're supposed to keep an eye on you. To keep you safe from - you know - Hannibal the Cannibal.

STARLING
Show me.

He knows what that means, and shows her identification from Crawford's private security firm.

CONTINUED:

She gets up off the other one then, tosses the branch away and walks over to the gun resting on the fallen leaves. She picks it up.

STARLING
Okay, here it is: I don't need you looking after me. I'm not in any danger. If you talk to him before I do tell him that.

2ND RUNNER
Yes, ma'am.

She returns the guns to each of them, first giving the one on the ground a hand up.

STARLING
Sorry if I hurt you.

She leaves them, continues on her run. As the one she threw to the ground dusts himself off, the perspective changes to -

A VIEW THROUGH BINOCULARS

- of the two private security men off in the distance.

They blur then as the binoculars are shifted. Trees, too, blur across the lenses. The view overtakes Starling, returns and follows her, focusing as she runs through the trees, staying on her until she disappears down a sloping path.

Lecter lowers the small, expensive field glasses. Returns them to their case slung over his shoulder. Crosses the dirt parking area to her Mustang. Peers inside and sees no blinking red light on the dash.

He takes out a slim jim. Slips it down and across the driver's side jamb, tripping the lock. He opens the door and sits in the bucket seat a long moment before delicately touching the ten- and two-o'clock points on the leather-clad steering wheel where her hands rest most often. He leans closer to smell her on the leather. Then licks it.

INT. KRENDLER'S DC TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

Krendler, just back from a jog himself, sweaty T-shirt and headband, sits with Cordell and reads a postcard from London sheathed in plastic, written in Lecter's distinctive copper-plate. Finishing, he looks up at a speaker phone -

KRENDLER
I'm not sure I understand.

MASON'S VOICE
You don't have to understand, Paul. All you have to understand is what it's worth to you.

KRENDLER
No, I don't understand why she didn't turn this over; she's such a - *straight arrow.*

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME

Looking at *his* speakerphone, Verger sighs. Maybe he's making a terrible mistake. Maybe Krendler is just too stupid to be of any real use to him. As if to a child -

MASON
She didn't turn it over because she didn't *receive* it. She didn't *receive* it because it was never *delivered* to her. It was delivered to *me* for a nice gratuity to a not-so-nice mail room boy.

KRENDLER'S VOICE
Oh. *Ohhh.*

The realization, and Krendler's look of admiration that follows it, only makes Verger worry more about his stupidity.

MASON
So what do you think?

KRENDLER'S VOICE
I think you'd have been better off if you hadn't gotten her out of trouble in the first place.

MASON
Woulda, shoulda, coulda - I *meant*, what do you think of the money?

INT. KRENDLER'S TOWNHOUSE - CONTINUED

KRENDLER
Five.

MASON'S VOICE
Well, let's just toss it off like, "*five.*" Let's say it with the respect it deserves.

KRENDLER
Five hundred thousand dollars.

CONTINUED:

MASON'S VOICE
That's better, but not much, but don't say it again. Will it work?

Krendler considers the forged postcard again. Eventually -

KRENDLER
It won't be pretty.

MASON'S VOICE
What ever *is*?

INT. A/DIC NOONAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Starling sits next to her boss, Pearsall, and across from *his* boss, Noonan. Krendler, too, is there, and a federal marshal standing in a corner of the quiet room.

NOONAN
Would you identify yourself, please, for the record?

STARLING
Special Agent Clarice Starling. *Is* there a record, Director Noonan? I'd like there to be since I have no idea what this is about. Do you mind if *I* run a tape?

She takes a little Nagra from her purse, sets it on the desk and turns it on.

NOONAN
Tell her the charges.

KRENDLER
Withholding evidence and obstruction of justice.

The marshal sets the postcard with the familiar-looking copperplate in front of Starling. Her eyes move quickly back and forth across the lines of words. She doesn't touch it.

NOONAN
Like to comment? On tape?

STARLING
Yes, I would. I've never seen this before in my life.

KRENDLER
How do you account for its being found in your - office - your - *basement*?

CONTINUED:

STARLING
Found by who?

KRENDLER
By me.

STARLING
I don't think you want me to answer that, Mr. Krendler. Let me ask you this: What possible reason might I have to withhold it?

KRENDLER
Perhaps because of the nature of its content. It reads like a - like a love letter to me.

As Krendler comes over and hovers over her shoulder, it's all she can do to keep herself from slugging him.

STARLING
Has it been tested for prints?

NOONAN
No prints on it. None on the last one.

STARLING
Handwriting (analysis) - ?

KRENDLER
(before Noonan can answer)
Did you ever think, Clarice, why the Philistines don't understand you? It's because you're the answer to Samson's riddle: You are the honey in the lion. Sounds like him to me.

STARLING
Do you mean, Mr. Krendler, like a homosexual?

KRENDLER
Like a nut with a crush.

Noonan, not a bad guy, chooses his next words carefully -

NOONAN
Clarice, I'm placing you on administrative leave until Document Analysis tells me, unequivocally, a mistake's been made. In the meantime you'll remain eligible for insurance and medical benefits.
(MORE)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOONAN (CONT'D)
Please surrender your weapons and identification to Agent Pearsall.

Looking steadily at Krendler Starling takes out her .45, drops the clip into her hand, shucks the round out of the pistol's chamber and sets it all down on the desk. As she places her ID next to it, Pearsall asks her sadly -

PEARSALL
Backup sidearm?

STARLING
Locked in my car.

PEARSALL
Other tactical equipment?

STARLING
Helmet and vest.

NOONAN
(to the marshal)
You'll retrieve those when you escort Miss Starling from the building.

The marshal comes toward her.

STARLING
I want to say something. I think I'm entitled.

NOONAN
Go ahead.

STARLING
I think Mr. Mason Verger is trying to capture Dr. Lecter himself for the purpose of personal revenge. I think Mr. Krendler is in collusion with him and wants the FBI's effort against Dr. Lecter to work for Mr. Verger. I think Mr. Krendler is being *paid* to do this.

KRENDLER
It's a good thing you're not sworn here today.

STARLING
Swear me! You swear, too!

CONTINUED: (3)

NOONAN
Starling. If the evidence is lacking, you'll be entitled to full reinstatement without prejudice - *if* you don't do - or say - something in the meantime that would make that impossible.

Starling just keeps staring at Krendler as she gathers her Nagra and purse. Finally, she glances over to her boss and friend, Pearsall, who mouths -

PEARSALL
Sorry, Starling.

She lets the marshal lead her from the room.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE - DAY

Lecter, clutching a shopping bag, stands in the electronics department before a wall of television sets all tuned to the same channel, local news, a talking head with an inset of a photograph of Starling.

TALKING HEAD
- relieved of field duty pending an internal investigation into the charges. Starling, a 7-year veteran on the Bureau began her career with an assignment to interview lethal madman, Hannibal Lecter -

LECTER
- Doctor -

SALES CLERK
May I help you, sir?

Lecter glances to the young sales clerk, a teenager with a name tag.

LECTER
I *was* looking for some good steak knives, Toby, but I'm afraid I got distracted.

SALES CLERK
Kitchenware, right over there.

LECTER
Thank you.

The clerk walks away. Lecter glances back to the TVs to see that a black and white inset photograph of himself has been added to the one of Starling.

CONTINUED:

TALKING HEAD
- receiving information from him which led to killer Jame Gumb and the release of his hostage Catherine Martin, daughter of the former U.S. Senator from Tennessee.

Lecter glances over to "Toby," who is busy pointing out to a customer the features of various VCRs, his back to the screens. Footage of Krendler appears on them -

KRENDLER ON TV
FBI and the Justice Department are looking carefully into the charges, and yes, they are serious. But I want to say this: Starling's one of the best agents we have and having known her for a number of years now, I would be very surprised if the accusations turn out to be true. It's much too soon to condemn her.

Lecter smiles at Krendler's image. He always smiles upon finding himself in the presence of bad liars.

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Silent. Still. Then the lock turning in the front door. It opens. Starling, looking weary, carries in a cardboard box, her things from her desk at "the office," no bigger than Brigham's was. As she passes us -

Later. Laundry room. Absently dropping clothes in a washing machine filling with water, she then slides down to the floor in despair, her back against the warm enamel -

Later. Living room. Pouring herself a neat Jack Daniels to the accompaniment of the first message on her answering machine, the voice sounding almost as tired as her -

CRAWFORD'S VOICE
Hey. It's Jack. How you doing? I'm sure it's not as bad as it looks. I feel it's my fault. I got you into all this. Call me. Make me feel better.

She carries the drink to the sofa, lies down, hasn't bothered to turn on any lights. Drinks as the second message plays -

BARNEY'S VOICE
It's Barney. Remember me? I got your number from, uh - I mean I know it's un-listed, but, I, ummm, I'm pretty good on the computer ...
(MORE)

BARNEY'S VOICE (CONT'D)
- save a few bucks on my phone bill, don't arrest me -
(she smiles; closes her eyes)
I'm sorry, uh - about what happened to you. I feel bad. For you. I was, umm, wondering if you might want to call me if you get the chance - 555-7026. I, uh -
(in a firmer tone:)
I think she's nice. She's always been nice to me. Polite. Don't you think?

Tight on Starling's cassette deck - the spindles turning the tape inside. Stack of other tapes she got from Barney lying next to it.

LECTER'S VOICE
Do you know what a roller pigeon is, Barney?

Starling is asleep on the sofa now. Still in her clothes.

LECTER'S VOICE
They climb high and fast, then roll over and fall just as fast toward the earth. There are shallow rollers and deep rollers. You can't breed two deep rollers, or their young will roll all the down, hit, and die. Officer Starling is a deep roller, Barney. We should hope one of her parents was not.

The tape reaches its leader and stops. The green power light stays on. Then it goes off, then comes back on again: an electrical interruption that is quickly reestablished. *

INT. BASEMENT - STARLING'S HOUSE - SAME TIME *

A basement window slightly open. A piece of insulated wire clipped to the alarm contacts. A shadow of a figure floating away from it. *

The figure moves toward the stairs, passing a rusty bicycle hanging on the wall and some shooting trophies gathering dust on a shelf, and begins up the stairs. *

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER *

The microwave oven's glowing reset numbers "88:88" are obscured a moment as the figure soundlessly passes. Ice tumbles from the refrigerator's ice-maker into the bin. *

In the living room, Starling is still asleep, her empty glass resting on a wood coffee table. *

CONTINUED:

A digital desk clock blinks "00:00." Tiny sounds echo in the dark house - the hum of the furnace, the whistle of a pant leg touching fabric on a chair, slick pages being turned ... a sigh.

EXT. STARLING'S HOUSE - DAWN

The basement window, closed now, reflecting the glow of sunrise. Power lines against the red sky. A pigeon sitting on the wire, calling out once.

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - DAWN

Starling wakes in the same position she fell asleep. In front of her is her empty glass. Set down not on top of the wood as she left it, *but on a thick magazine.*

She knows that's not right. Sits up enough to see the cover of the magazine. Italian *Vogue*. Edge of a *Post-It* peeking out from the pages. She uses the Post-It to turn to the marked page. A glossy Prada advertisement for expensive - unsensible - shoes.

He's been in her house. Right here as she slept. She's up fast, rushing to her bedroom. To the closet. Pulling down from the top shelf the box containing Brigham's guns and ID.

She slams a clip into the .45. As she's loading the little .38, the phone rings, startling her. She stares at it on the night stand next to the alarm clock: 10:30 A.M. It rings again. She slowly crosses toward it. Another ring. She lifts the receiver. Says nothing. Hears nothing. Until -

RECORDED VOICE
If you're not receiving frequent flyer miles on *your* credit card, you're missing out on -

She hangs up. Returns to loading the gun. The cell phone on her *hip* rings, and a bullet falls to the floor. She pulls the phone from its holster. Answers it, again, by saying nothing. Only listens. Hears a little static. Connection to another cell phone probably. Then -

LECTER'S VOICE
The power on that battery is low, Clarice. I would've changed it, but I didn't want to wake you. You're going to have to use the other one. In the charger. Hopefully the light on it is green by now.

The charger is right in front of her on the dresser. And the light on it *is* green - fully charged.

CONTINUED:

LECTER'S VOICE
- because this is going to be a long call and I can't let you off because - even though you've been *stripped* of your duties, I know you won't *abandon* them, you'll try to put on a trace. So we'll disconnect only long enough for you to exchange the battery in the phone for the one in the charger. Shall we say - three seconds? That should be enough. You can change the clip on a .45 quicker than that. So when I tell you to, disengage the dying battery. That'll disconnect us. I'll speed dial back. If you've succeeded in your task in the allotted time - *wonderful*. If not? Well maybe some other time. Are you ready?

STARLING
Yes.

LECTER'S VOICE
Go.

It *looks* like changing the clip in a gun - the low battery falling away from the body of the phone into her hand, the charged one slapped in its place in just over two seconds. She hits the power button. The LCD display lights up and beeps. The phone rings and she flips it open.

LECTER'S VOICE
Very good.

STARLING
Thank you.

LECTER'S VOICE
Get in your car.

She begins gathering the guns and holsters and ammo.

LECTER'S VOICE
Oh, all right, bring the guns if you want. But remember, if you get caught with a concealed, unlicensed firearm in the District of Columbia, the penalty is pretty stiff.

INT. STARLING'S MUSTANG - MOVING - DAY

She's in the far right lane of a highway. Keeping just under the speed limit. The cell phone rests atop the open ashtray.

CONTINUED:

LECTER'S VOICE
The reason we're doing it like this, Clarice, *is because I'd like to see you* as we speak. With your eyes open. No, it doesn't *excite* me. Yes, it pleases me. You have very shapely feet. *
Call it out. *

STARLING
Exit 14-A. Three hundred yards - two hundred - one hundred - fifty -

LECTER'S VOICE
Take it.

She veers onto the ramp without a signal. A van, several lengths back, takes the exit, too.

INT. UNION STATION - DAY

Starling enters the huge, echoing interior of the station with a crush of travelers and Christmas shoppers. She has the phone to her ear and, through it, can hear sounds not dissimilar to those around her.

LECTER'S VOICE
I thought, to begin, you might tell me how you're feeling.

STARLING
About what?

LECTER'S VOICE
The masters you serve and how they've * treated you. Your *career*, such as it is. * Your *life*, Clarice. *

The place is not just trains, but also a mall of stores, many of them playing Christmas music. Outside one of them, on the second tier, Lecter, cell phone to *his* ear, watches Starling trying to sort out the cacophony of sounds down below.

STARLING'S VOICE
I thought we might talk about *yours*.

LECTER
Mine? What is there to say about mine? I'm happy. Healthy. A *little* nomadic at the moment but that'll soon change. You, though. You I'm worried about.

Carlo and Piero, *without* phones, have entered the building and brush past people as they scan its interior, looking for and eventually spotting Starling rising up an escalator.

STARLING
I'm fine.

LECTER'S VOICE
No, you're not. You fell in love with the Bureau - with *The Institution* - only to discover, after giving it everything - that it doesn't love you back. That it resents you, more than the husband and children you gave up to it ever would.

Lecter is going *down* an escalator as Starling approaches where he was just moments ago, outside the Gap Kids store.

LECTER
Why is that, do you think? Why are you so resented?

STARLING'S VOICE
Tell me.

LECTER
Tell you? Isn't it clear? You serve the idea of order, Clarice - they don't. You believe in the oath you took - they don't. You feel it's your duty to protect the sheep - they don't. They don't *like* you because they're *not* like you. They're weak and unruly and believe in nothing. *

She's lost him. Peers down over the railing. Listens to the background sounds in her phone.

STARLING
Mason Verger wants to kill you, Dr. Lecter. Turn yourself in to me and I promise no one will hurt you.

LECTER'S VOICE
Will you stay with me in my prison cell? Hmmm? I suppose it wouldn't be *that* much worse than yours.

She hears a bell clanging. Sees a Salvation Army "soldier" in the far distance below, his back to her, his arm moving up and down, but can't tell if it synchronizes with the sound in her phone.

CONTINUED: (2)

LECTER'S VOICE
Mason doesn't want to *kill* me, Clarice, any more than I wanted to kill him. He wants me to suffer in some - *unimaginable* way. He's rather twisted, you know. Always has been. Have you had the pleasure?

STARLING
I have.

LECTER'S VOICE
Attractive, isn't he. But back to you -

She steps off the *down* escalator and heads toward the Salvation Army soldier and his little kettle hanging from the tripod, the bell in her phone diminishing proportionally, it seems, as she nears the live one.

LECTER'S VOICE
I want to know what it is you think you will do, now that all you cared about in the world is gone. Will you work as a chambermaid at a motel on Route 66, like *Mom*?

STARLING
I don't know, Dr. Lec -

LECTER'S VOICE
Don't you want to *harm* those who have forced you to consider it? I know you never would, but wouldn't you *like* to? Wouldn't it feel <u>good</u>? It's all right to admit it. It's perfectly natural. To want to *taste* the enemy.

She stops moving. Listens. Hears *Jingle Bells* in her phone.

LECTER'S VOICE
Are you thinking? Or *tracking*, Ex-Special Agent Starling?

Jingle Bells begins to fade in her phone. He's moving again. She turns. Carlo and Piero do an abrupt about-face. But not before Starling sees them.

STARLING
They're following me, Dr. Lecter.

LECTER'S VOICE
I know. I see them. Now you're in a real dilemma, aren't you?
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

LECTER'S VOICE (CONT'D)
Do you continue to try to find me, *knowing that you're leading* them to me? Do you have so much faith in your abilities that you believe you could somehow - *simultaneously* - arrest me - *and* them? It could get messy, Clarice. Like Memphis.

She can hear another voice - both "live" and in the phone - "Ho, Ho, Ho, Merry Christmas" - and can see above heads in the distance, a department store Santa Claus in a painted plywood sleigh. She moves toward him.

LECTER'S VOICE
What if I did it for you?

STARLING
Did what?

LECTER'S VOICE
Harmed them, Clarice. The ones who've harmed *you*. What if I made them scream apologies? No, I shouldn't even say it because you'll feel - with your perfect grasp on right and wrong - that you were somehow - *accompli* - even though you wouldn't be.

STARLING
Don't - help me.

LECTER'S VOICE
No. Of course not. Forget I said it.

She's closing in on the sleigh and the barricade of kids and parents around it, her free hand settling on the stock of her .45, Carlo and Piero closing with her several steps back.

SANTA CLAUS
Ho - Ho - Ho.

Lecter sees her and the Sardinians pushing through the crowd.

LECTER
Ho, ho, ho, indeed. I think I'll be going now. I have some shopping to do anyway. Chin up, Clarice. Merry Christmas.

He disconnects the call. Starling breaks through the front of the crowd, moving just in front of the sleigh to scan the faces all around her. Lecter is gone.

EXT. DC DOWNTOWN - DAY

Traffic crawls past Christofle.

INT. CHRISTOFLE - DAY

An armed security guard's glance drifts across Lecter pointing out to a saleswoman the Gien French china he'd like to purchase.

Later, she rings up several purchases as Lecter looks on, credit card out: the plates, a set of aperitif glasses and Riedel crystal, linen place mats and napkins, 19th-century silverware with a pleasing heft like good dueling pistols.

INT. HAMMACHER SCHLEMMER - DAY

Lecter chooses a set of exquisite copper saute pans and a couple of whisks. Elsewhere, a salesman demonstrates for him the adjustable height of the flame on a portable 35,000 BTU stainless steel grill.

INT. MEDICAL SUPPLY STORE - DAY

And finally, to complete his *batterie de cuisine*, he pays for a newly-new Stryker autopsy saw.

EXT. CHESAPEAKE BAY - EVENING

A late-model, but not new, Ford Ranger pickup pulls into the driveway of a small yet charming cottage nestled in the woods.

Lecter climbs out and gathers his bungy-corded shopping bags from the truck bed, including the one with the distinctive powder blue coloring.

He leaves the boxed Parker grill in back, at least for the moment, carries the rest of his purchases to the front door, fiddles with the lock to get it open and disappears inside.

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - EVENING

Light bleeds along the edges of a scanner. Images appear on Starling's computer screen: Brigham's FBI identification next to a photo-booth picture of her. Using a paint-program, she replaces his photo with hers and prints it out.

INT. WINE STORE - ANNAPOLIS - DAY

As a wine merchant leans slightly to take a closer look at Starling's new ID, laminated now, she closes its leatherette holder. Christmas Muzak plays softly from somewhere.

(CONTINUED)

STARLING
You're sure it was Chateau d'Y quem.

WINE MERCHANT
Not only was it Chateau d'Y quem, it was Chateau d'Y quem - *sixty-seven*. The best bottle of wine in the store.

STARLING
Can I see the tape? If his car was parked out front, you may have caught the license plate.

EXT. STREET - ANNAPOLIS - SAME TIME

The rear license plate of the Ford Ranger. 10-foot Noble Christmas tree in back. The pickup parked across the street from the shopping center the wine store is part of.

Behind the windshield, Lecter carefully surveys the people and vehicles in the large parking lot and those appearing and disappearing in his side and rearview mirrors, well aware that one of them could contain the Sardinians.

INT. WINE STORE - CONTINUED

Starling has come behind the counter to join the merchant as he fast-forwards through a security tape on a small black and white monitor.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUED

Still in his truck, Lecter watches the parking lot across the street. He watches the trunk lid of a yellow cab spring open and the driver setting his elderly fare's grocery bags into it. He watches a man struggling to twine a big Douglas fir to the roof of sub-compact that's too small for it. He watches a rolling, rattling cart without anyone attached to it.

INT. WINE STORE - CONTINUED

Starling watches the fuzzy video tape. Watches a man come in wearing a parka and mittens and a billed cap pulled low enough to hide his face, but can't make out the license plates on the cars parked outside.

EXT. STREET / PARKING LOT - SAME TIME

Lecter puts the same hat on, unlatches his door, climbs down. He crosses the street to the lot and walks past parked cars, a box in his hand wrapped in Christmas angels paper.

INT. WINE STORE - CONTINUED

The video tape shows the wine merchant returning from the back room, wiping dust from a bottle and displaying its label to the man in the billed hat. Through the window of the store now, if she was looking, she would see the same man approaching her Mustang.

EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUED

A slim jim drops down the sleeve of Lecter's overcoat into his hand. A barrel of a rifle, somewhere, rises. The blade of the slim jim slides down between the driver's side jamb and trips the lock. Something slaps at the air across the lot. Something silver embeds itself in Lecter's neck.

INT/EXT. WINE STORE / PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Starling glances up at the air-rifle sound. Glimpses a figure outside collapsing against the open door of her car.

Squealing tires. A van racing across the lot sends a cart crashing into the door panel of an Audi.

The Christmas gift falls to the pavement.

Starling pulls out Brigham's .45 and the wine merchant retreats quickly to the back room. She runs from the store and kneels to aim at the van just as a Lincoln Towncar pulls up right in front her, blocking her view.

The van's back doors fling open and two men leap down, grabbing Lecter.

Starling back on her feet, aims over the hood of the Lincoln.

STARLING
Hold it! FBI! On the ground!

The handicapped parking placard and two old panicked faces in the windshield of the Lincoln. The screech of its tires as it almost runs Starling over as she comes around it.

The back doors of the van yanked shut from inside.

Starling running toward the van, then kneeling again to aim as it takes off -

An oblivious couple sharing the weight of a Christmas tree twenty yards ahead, blocking the clear shot she almost had.

The van sliding into the street and accelerating.

CONTINUED:

Starling running to her car and writing down the license plate number in the dirt on its hood.

Then seeing beside her slashed front tire, the trampled Christmas package. The box torn open. The Prada shoes.

INT. FBI DC FIELD OFFICE - AN HOUR LATER - DAY

Halos around the mundane contents of a purse as it passes through an x-ray machine; the visitor it belongs to stepping through the metal detector. Shouldering the purse she crosses the lobby to the elevators, passing Pearsall coming the other way. He strides to where Starling waits - on the street side of the security station - unable, in her current lowly status, to get any deeper into the building.

STARLING
I know the first thing a hysteric says is, "I'm not a hysteric," but I'm not a hysteric. I'm calm.

PEARSALL
I'll ask you one time. Think before you answer. Think about every good thing you ever did here. Think about what you swore. What did you see?

STARLING
Two men in a van. A third driving. Another man shot and put into the back. I've given you the license plate and I'm reporting it all again to you, Clint Pearsall, at SAC Buzzard's Point.

He glances at the purse hanging from her shoulder. No doubt her Nagra is in it and taping. Finally -

PEARSALL
All right. I'll go with it as a kidnapping. I'll send someone out there with the local authorities - *if* he'll let us on the property without a warrant -

STARLING
I'm going, too. You could deputize -

PEARSALL
You're *not* going. Unless you want to be arrested. You're going home where you'll wait for me to call and tell you what, if anything, we found.

He turns and strides away.

EXT. VERGER'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Cordell standing amidst several idling marked and unmarked police cars as the officers climb in and shut the doors.

OFFICER
Please thank Mr. Verger for letting us look around. Sorry if we inconvenienced him.

CORDELL
Not at all. He's always happy to see you. He also wanted me to wish you and your families a Merry Christmas for him, and to assure you this'll not effect, in any way, his annual contribution to the Police Benevolence Fund.

One of the plain clothes men speaks into a cell phone -

FBI AGENT
Nothing here, Clint ... We're sure.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME

The flashing lights of the patrol cars flare across the black and white security monitors as the police drive away. Verger, watching from his bed, presses a button on a remote that dials a number.

INT. VAN - NIGHT

The ringing of a cell phone cuts through the voices and static of a police scanner. Carlo answers it.

MASON'S VOICE
How is he?

Lecter lies unconscious, handcuffed and bound on the floor of the van. One of Piero's hands - perilously close to the doctor's mouth - feels for the pulse on his neck. The other holds a milk shake.

CARLO
Sleeping.

MASON'S VOICE
Bring him home.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The van's headlights blink on as it pulls out of a fast food restaurant.

INT. STARLING'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The phone rings here in the darkened house. The machine answers it.

PEARSALL'S VOICE
Pick up, Starling... There was nothing out there... I'm going to say it again in case you didn't hear me clearly before: You are *not* a law officer while on suspension. You're Joe Blow. For your sake I hope you're just in the bathroom.

EXT. VIRGINIA HIGHWAY NEAR VERGER'S FARM - NIGHT

The police cars, their flashing lights dark now, pass Starling's Mustang, headlights off, parked on a turn-out.

INT. VERGER'S MANSION - NIGHT

Cordell's shoes move along the same Moroccan runner as in the first scene; only now there are others, work boots, three sets, moving along with them, and the wheels of a hand truck. They all cross onto the polished linoleum floor.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

The hand truck stops. Strapped to it is a singletree, a thick oak crosspiece from a horse cart harness, and tied to it with rope, Hannibal Lecter, wearing the famous mask from *The Silence of the Lambs*. Just coming out of the sedative from the dart, he squints into the lights surrounding the hospital bed.

MASON
Hylochoerus Meinertzhageni ... Does that ring a bell from high school biology, doctor? No? I could list its most conspicuous features if that would help jog the memory.

Suddenly the lights go out, allowing Lecter - and us - to see Verger in the shadows in his bed.

MASON
Three pairs of incisors, one pair of elongated canines, three pairs of molars, four pairs of pre-molars upper and lower, for a total of forty-four teeth.

Lecter is conscious, but seems not be particularly interested in the science lecture.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MASON
The meal will begin with an *apertivo tartare.* Your feet. The main course - the rest of you - won't be served until seven hours later, but during that time you'll be able to enjoy the *effects* of the consumed appetizer with a full-bodied saline drip.

No reaction, that can be read at least, from Lecter.

MASON
Much as I'd love to, I won't be joining you at the table since I can't move, but I will be watching a 3-camera video feed here, and I'll try to stay awake.
(he smiles as much as he's able; then)
I guess you wish now you'd fed the *rest* of me to the dogs? Hmmm?

LECTER
No, Mason. I much prefer you the way you are.

MASON
(pause; then buoyantly)
So. Dinner at eight? Bon appetit.

EXT. VERGER'S ESTATE - DAY

Starling's Mustang creeps along the service road without the aid of its headlights. Up ahead about a quarter mile, in the trees, she can see the glare of a floodlight.

She stops. Pulls the trunk release. Climbs out and comes around to it. Rummages around the debris inside and selects four pairs of cuffs, extra ammo, a knife and a flashlight.

She leaves the trunk ajar, aims the flashlight down, switches it on and leads herself with its beam - careful to keep it no more than two or three steps ahead - into the woods.

INT. BARN - NIGHT

Lecter, still trussed to the singletree, prone now on the hand truck, stares up at the rafters where Tommaso sits in a cane chair, a rifle in his lap.

Below, one of three closed-circuit video cameras mounted on tripods watches as Carlo, not being too careful about it, pierces his wrist with an IV needle.

CONTINUED:

LECTER
Your brother must smell worse than you do by *now*.

The blade of Carlo's knife is up against Lecter's throat in an instant. From an intercom -

MASON'S VOICE
No, no, no - don't *hurt* him.

Lecter smiles at the Sardinian. The knife slowly comes away from his neck, leaving only a little blood.

Piero meanwhile is adjusting the angle of a gilt-framed mirror hanging above the slatted gate Lecter's feet will soon be stuck through.

MASON'S VOICE
And turn off that radio, I can't *hear* anything.

A shortwave radio on a wooden table that's broadcasting a soccer game in Italian. As Piero crosses to it -

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Starling, still, listens as the already-faint sound of the Italian announcer's voice fades to nothing. She continues on again toward the floodlit area beyond the trees until another sound stops her. Another recorded voice. Begging and screaming in Italian.

Suddenly, through the trees all around her, dark shapes are moving fast. She wants to but dares not point the flashlight at them; if they're armed, the beam may as well be a painted target on her chest.

She crouches. Catches a glimpse of something big running close to the ground past the trunks of the trees near her. Then it's gone.

INT/EXT. BARN - NIGHT

The wild boars appear in the reflection of the large gold-framed mirror, jostling into a semi-circle like berserk linemen posing for a team photo.

Piero dials down the screaming tape. Carlo rights the hand truck, hooks a saline bag to it, and wheels it toward the slatted gate. Tipped back, rolling slowly closer to his death, Lecter begins humming *Pomp and Circumstance*.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Verger, glancing between the three monitors displaying the upcoming live event, glimpses something in one of them as it darts along the fence line of the pen, then disappears.

MASON
What was that? Cordell? Did you see that?

INT/EXT. BARN - NIGHT

A boom of a .45 echoes in the barn. Tommaso, still up in the loft, throws himself down against the planks.

STARLING
Hold it! Hands where I can see -

Carlo's hand swings around with a .357 in it. Starling fires once, knocking him back against the gate. Piero makes a move toward the fallen gun, but stops when he sees a slat splinter right next to it, the boars surging at the gate to get to Carlo on the ground just inside it.

STARLING
Down!

Piero kneels with his empty hands aloft. Starling crosses quickly with a set of handcuffs. In the loft, Tommaso crawls along the planks as she disappears from his view. Down below Lecter cranes his head to watch Starling pick up the gun.

LECTER
Good evening, Clar -

STARLING
Shut up.

She kneels. Lecter tries to bend his head to watch her snap a cuff around one of Carlo's wrists.

STARLING
Can you walk?

LECTER
Well, I don't know. May I try?

The boars pound against the gate, trying to get at Carlo. Starling drags him a couple of feet away and pulls a knife from an ankle strap.

CONTINUED:

STARLING
I'm going to cut you loose. If you *touch* me, I'll shoot you.

LECTER
Understood perfectly.

STARLING
Do right and you'll live through this.

LECTER
Spoken like a Protestant.

She cuts one of his arms free, keeping her gun trained on Piero, still on the ground by Carlo. The boars shatter another slat.

LECTER
This might go a little quicker if you give me the knife.

She hesitates. Then gives it to him. As he cuts at the ropes, she works to lock the other end of Carlo's cuffs onto Piero's wrist. As he removes the mask -

LECTER
Clarice?

STARLING
What.

LECTER
My back was turned when you came in. Was that a warning shot, or did you kill the one in the loft?

She spins around, aiming up, just as the bullet from the rifle slams into her unvested abdomen. Going down, she pulls off three quick shots, hitting Tommaso in the chest.

As he falls from the loft, the boars come crashing through the gate. Piero desperately tries to get away, dragging the dead weight of Carlo behind him. Lecter lifts Starling from the ground, blood running onto his fingers.

Piero is pulled down. Lecter, holding Starling, surrounded by the animals, too, stands perfectly still as the boars ravage the three Sardinians.

INT. VERGER'S CHAMBER - SAME TIME

Verger stares in disbelief at the monitor that shows nothing but the moving mass of the boars thrashing around but leaving alone Lecter's legs.

MASON
Why aren't they - ? *Cordell* -

CORDELL
I have to go now -

MASON
No. In the drawer - right by your hand. Open it. *Open it!*

Cordell opens the drawer revealing a semi-automatic pistol.

MASON
Take it. Go down there. Shoot him.

CORDELL
No, I -

MASON
You're *involved* is what you are.

He's *frightened* is what he is. He's a medical doctor, for Christ's sake, not a hunter of madmen. He stares at Verger.

CORDELL
What did you say - ?

MASON
I said you're *involved*. In *all* of it.

Cordell seems to understand, nods in resignation, and turns as if to take the gun.

MASON
Good. Now -

Cordell plunges his hand into the aquarium and turns back holding the writhing eel. Watching him approach the bed with it, Verger, for once, is speechless, staring at the serpent's clicking teeth.

CORDELL
Good night, Mason.

As Cordell thrusts the head of the eel toward Verger's gaping mouth -

EXT/INT. BARN - SAME TIME

Lecter, carrying Starling, stares a couple of the boars in the eye, wades through them with impunity, steps out past the splintered gate and disappears into the woods ...

EXT. CHESAPEAKE BAY - EVENING

A pair of distance headlights floating along the shoreline.

INT. KRENDLER'S CAR - EVENING

Krendler, trying to keep the agitation out of his voice, speaks with an assistant on his car phone as he negotiates the dark ribbon of road.

KRENDLER
I'll be out at my weekend place through Sunday. I don't want any calls forwarded. No, not even him. Nobody.

He hangs up. Wipes at beads of sweat just below the sweatband of his jogging ensemble as his destination, his weekend cottage, comes into view through the windshield.

EXT. KRENDLER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

The car pulls into the driveway. Krendler gathers up the grocery bag from the passenger seat and carries it toward the front door of his cottage, which also happens to be *Lecter's*.

INT. KRENDLER'S/LECTER'S COTTAGE - NIGHT

Krendler comes into the darkened kitchen. Tries a light switch that doesn't work. Sets the grocery bag on a counter, pulls open a drawer and takes out a corkscrew. As he takes a bottle of cheap Chiati from the bag, he notices a simple strand of Christmas lights around a window. Doesn't remember hanging them. Stares, cocking his head the way he does.

LECTER'S VOICE
Oh, good, you brought wine.

Before Krendler can turn, his mouth is covered with an ether-soaked dish towel.

INT. KRENDLER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Starling's eyes open and slowly take in her surroundings: the small, unfamiliar room, the bed she's in, the night stand and the empty morphine vials on it, the silver tray with the crumpled bullet on it.

CONTINUED:

She eases the blanket down enough to see her T-shirt, eases the T-shirt up enough to see the bandage, eases the bandage away enough to see the stitched gunshot wound.

She hears quiet Christmas music and muffled voices from elsewhere in the house. Two men speaking in conversational tones. She drags herself from the bed, steadies herself, slowly crosses the room to, and down, a hallway.

At the end of it, she sees: A decorated Christmas tree. An archway to a dining room, candles on the dining table. Krendler, in his running clothes and sweatband, sitting at the head of it. Lecter, standing beside a portable grill on a service cart, stirring at a saute pan with a wooden spoon.

KRENDLER
Are those shallots?

LECTER
Ummm. And caper berries.

KRENDLER
The butter smells wonderful.

Starling glances from Krendler's face to his hands. He doesn't seem to notice or care that they're duct-taped to the arms of a wheelchair.

INT. BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Back in the bedroom, Starling uses her teeth to strip the 4-pin telephone wire that's been yanked from the wall jack.

INT. DINING ROOM - SAME TIME

As Lecter executes a modest flambe with a little brandy -

LECTER
I hope you're hungry, Paul.

KRENDLER
Very. What's the main course?

LECTER
Oh, you never ask. It spoils the surprise.

Lecter notices, but seems unconcerned, as the line-light blinks on a telephone.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUED

Starling searches drawers for some kind of weapon as she whispers into the phone -

STARLING
I don't have the address, but I *think* the house belongs to the hostage, whose name is Paul Krendler -

911 OPERATOR
I have it from the phone number. Now if you can *safely* do it, get out of the house. Otherwise, stay on the line where you are. The response time should be ten minutes. I'm putting you on hold for just a moment.

Starling hears an unusual sound from the other room, but not *so* unusual that she doesn't recognize it: It's the whir of an autopsy saw. She sets the receiver on the bed and -

911 OPERATOR
I'm back. Ma'am - ?

The phone goes dead as Starling yanks the 25-foot cord from the wall and wraps it quickly around her hand, taking it with her, perhaps to use as a garrote, as she leaves the room.

INT. HALL / DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

She's moving along the hall again. Hears the whir of the saw grinding through - *something* - then stop. She picks up a heavy glass paperweight from a bookcase shelf and conceals it in her hand.

She reaches the doorway to the living room and adjacent dining area. Sees Lecter straightening Krendler's sweatband. The doctor glances up and regards her calmly.

LECTER
Clarice. What are you doing up? You should be resting. Get back to bed.

STARLING
I'm hungry.

Krendler's head slowly turns to follow her as she crosses into the dining room unsteadily.

STARLING
Hello, Paul.

He doesn't respond. He seems in some kind of trance.

LECTER
Paul. Don't be rude. Say hello to Agent Starling.

KRENDLER
Hello, Starling. I always wanted to watch you eat.

As Lecter lays out another place setting of fine china (but not silverware) for Starling, she sees the spent syringe and the autopsy saw on a trivet next to the butane grill.

LECTER
Would you like to say grace?

KRENDLER
Me? Grace? Okay.

He bows his head. Starling and Lecter don't. She glances to the twisting pendulum of a hurricane clock. The doctor just smiles faintly, well aware of the response time.

KRENDLER
Father, we thank Thee for the blessings we are about to receive and dedicate them to Thy mercy. Forgive us all, even white trash like Starling here, and bring her into my service. Amen.

As his head comes back up, a single rivulet of blood drips out from under the sweatband. Lecter stirs at his *buerre-noisette.*

LECTER
Paul, I have to tell you, the *Apostle* Paul couldn't have done better. He hated women, too.

Krendler smiles rather stupidly at Starling. As much as she hates him, she doesn't want to see what she *thinks* Lecter has in store for him, and tries to forestall it with conversation and requests -

STARLING
May I have some wine?

LECTER
I don't think that's a good idea, Clarice. Not with the morphine. Better you should have some broth.

Lecter sets about ladling her and Krendler tureens of it.

KRENDLER
By the way, Starling, that was a job offer I worked into the blessing. I'm going to Congress, you know.

STARLING
Are you?

KRENDLER
Come around campaign headquarters. You could be an office girl. Can you type and file? Can you take dictation? Take this down: Washington is full of cornpone country pussy.

STARLING
I already took that down. You said it before.

LECTER
Paul. Please. Now you are being rude. Drink your broth.

As Lecter puts the straw in the tureen to Krendler's lips and whispers something in his ear, Starling eyes the sharper utensils on the other side of the table next to the grill.

KRENDLER
This soup's not very good.

LECTER
I admit I added a little something extra to yours. Perhaps it's clashing with the cumin. I assure you, though, you'll *love* the second course, that is if I can serve it before Clarice bashes my head in.

He commands her to show him what's in the hand in her lap with a smile and a slight tip of his head. She obeys, setting the paperweight weapon on the table.

KRENDLER
Hey, that's mine.

Lecter rakes it across to him with a fork like a croupier. As Krendler shakes it and watches snow fall on the Capital building, he's oblivious to Lecter taking off his sweatband revealing the neat incision carved all the way around.

CONTINUED: (3)

Starling can do little more than we can as Lecter *lifts the top of Krendler's head off* - staring in disbelief at the pinky-gray dome of Krendler's exposed brain. Lecter reaches for a set of tonsil spoons as the butter in the saute pan sizzles to a golden brown.

STARLING
I really would like some wine.

Lecter, poised over Krendler's brain with the tongs, looks at her disapprovingly. She's holding out her empty glass like Oliver as the pendulum twists back and forth.

LECTER
All right. But just a little.

He sets the spoons down. Pours some Chateau d'Y quem into her glass as he glances to the twisting pendulum.

LECTER
Unlike Paul, I unfortunately can't offer you a job in government. But I *am* curious. What will you do now?

Right now her hand is slowly inching across the tablecloth toward a serrated knife. Lecter picks it up and one of the tongs and deftly severs the thalamus of Krendler's brain -

STARLING
Docter Lec -

LECTER
You certainly can't return to the bureau. Not that you'd want to. Even if you *could* convince them to take you back after all this, the Stain of Reinstatement would never go away.

Krendler's eyes look up as if to see what's going on, then follow Lecter's hands as he sets his prefrontal lobe in the saute pan.

KRENDLER
What did you say?

STARLING
I didn't say anything.

KRENDLER
I had plans for that smart mouth, but I'd *never* hire you now. Who gave you an appointment anyway?

CONTINUED: (4)

Lecter picks up the tongs again to scoop out another lobe.

LECTER
The brain itself feels no pain, Clarice, if that concerns you. And Paul certainly won't miss *this* - the prefrontal lobe is the seat of manners.

STARLING
Dr. Lecter, your profile at the border stations has five features. I'll trade you. Stop now and I'll tell you what they are.

LECTER
Trade? How does that word taste to you, Clarice? Cheap and metallic like sucking on a greasy coin to me. Your soup is getting cold.

He spoons out a second lobe and stirs it into the pan -

KRENDLER
That smells *great*.

LECTER
Have a taste, Paul.

He slides a taste of the "second course" onto a small plate, forks a piece and slips it into Krendler's open mouth.

KRENDLER
Ummm, it *is* good.

STARLING
Dr. Lec -

LECTER
No, I think a new life lies before you. A better life. With me? Hmmm, there's a thought.

Is he *serious*? He seems to be. Krendler glances stupidly from him to her and back again.

LECTER
I came halfway around the world just to watch you run in the woods. Run with me, Clarice.

KRENDLER
Who's Clarice?

LECTER
Agent *Starling*, Paul. If you can't keep up with the conversation, it's better you don't try to join in at all.

KRENDLER
Who?

STARLING
Me, Paul. I'm Starling.

KRENDLER
I don't think you could even answer my *phones*, whoever you are. That accent is just too - *Appalachian*. "The Honorable Paul *Krendler's* office."

LECTER
Paul?

KRENDLER
What.

LECTER
Remember what I said before? If you can't be polite to the other guests, you have to sit at the kids' table.

He sets the plates and sauce pan and all the utensils - including the knife - in Krendler's lap, and unlocks the wheels of the chair.

LECTER
I'll just be a minute cleaning up, Clarice. Don't get up, Paul will help me clear.

As Lecter pushes Krendler toward the kitchen, he glimpses on the way the headlights of a line of cars coming silently along the shoreline.

LECTER
Think about what I said, but *don't* drink any more wine while you do. Doctor's orders.

As soon as the door to the kitchen swings shut, she gets up, too fast, almost faints, sits back down. Listening for a moment to the scraping of plates, she tries again to stand, slower this time. She blows out a candle, grasps the stem of the heavy brass holder and with it and the phone cord, slowly crosses toward the closed kitchen door.

She slowly eases it open, revealing: Lecter, his back to her, *scraping the leftovers into Krendler's head* and setting the plates neatly in the dishwasher. He closes its door then and switches it on, and, keeping his back to her, begins wiping down the counters with a dish towel.

She eases past the door, gripping the heavy candlestick, and slowly approaches Lecter from behind, grateful for the hum of the dishwasher that covers the creaking of the floorboards.

Krendler is staring right at her as he shakes his Capital paperweight. She places a finger to her lips to tell him not to speak, and he glances away to the tiny falling snow.

KRENDLER
Would you like to swing on a star -
Carry moonbeams home in a jar -

The candlestick comes up and hangs there - as if Starling isn't entirely sure she wants to crack Lecter's skull open - but then it does come down hard right at his head, and -

Turning, he catches her wrist in his hand and pushes her roughly against the refrigerator, toppling the wheelchair and Krendler, the rest of his brain and some leftovers spilling onto the floor. Lecter holds Starling firmly in his grip, staring at her, intending, it appears, to kill her. But then, quietly -

LECTER
That's my girl. If you hadn't tried, I would have killed you ... But don't try *again* ... I *mean* it.

He lets her hands go and she immediately lunges for him again. He grabs her wrists again, pushes her back up against the fridge, opens it enough to catch her ponytail in the door and shoves the candlestick through the side-by-side handles.

LECTER
Oh, Clarice, you *are* the honey in the lion. In times to come, whenever you see yourself naked, whenever you see the scar - the *quality* of the stitching - you'll remember this moment -

His face, his sharp teeth, come threateningly close to her. He kisses her hard on the mouth.

LECTER
- and your lips will *burn*.

CONTINUED: (7)

He steps away, past Krendler and the wheelchair, picks up a small Tupperware container from the counter and walks out, leaving her to try to free herself.

EXT. THE COTTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Starling comes slowly out onto the porch. Looks for movement in the dark shapes of the trees across the road and sees none. Looks out across the Chesapeake and sees nothing in its dark water - except that the little rowboat, once tied to the dock, is now gone.

Feeling faint again - or just *tired of it all* - she sits on the porch swing, slows her breathing and the pounding of her heart, listens to the creak of the chains and the growl of the approaching police cars, and watches the glare of the approaching headlights play across the dark trees of the forest ...

DISSOLVE TO:

A VERMEER

hanging in a gallery. Foreign museum visitors strolling past, giving it a glance before moving on. One man, though, seems unable to get enough of it, standing before it as if before a shrine as the others keeps moving past. It's Barney. The painting, *Woman Holding the Balance* -

DISSOLVES TO:

A RECLINING WOMAN

asleep on a blanket on a beach. Starling. A beach ball and a Walkman resting beside her. The cord runs up across the scar on her exposed midriff to a light pair of headphones. Instead of music, she hears static, before -

MAN V/O
How are you covering yourself?

WOMAN V/O
Polaroids, monkey business, and none of your business. I'm not going to run. One-point-five-mil, Ricky, flat fee.

The conversation is overtaken by static again. Keeping her eyes closed, Starling nudges the beach ball and the voices of the man and woman, just two tiny figures waist deep in the Miami beach surf, reemerge from the static -

WOMAN V/O
No discussion. Just yes or no.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN V/O
Yes. We'll make the transfer at the Sun Trust conference room in the vault. I'll bring my lockbox, you bring yours.

A beachcomber passes, walking along the wet sand between Starling on the beach and the couple in the water. Crawford. In the headphones Starling hears -

CRAWFORD V/O
And we'll join the party, too. That's it, Starling. You just made us our ten percent. And all you had to do was put on sun screen.

She smiles without opening her eyes. Reaches down out of habit to adjust her top to cover the scar.

CRAWFORD V/O
You don't need to hide it. Your doctor did a nice job. You can hardly see it -

The roar of a jet covers his last word -

DISSOLVE TO:

A RECLINING SLEEPING BOY

in a darkened 747 cabin, window shades down, movie flickering. Stewardesses move down the aisles gathering the last of the lunch trays.

Sitting in coach next to the sleeping six year old boy, Lecter, in Toronto Maple Leafs sweats, waits until he's sure no one is looking at him, then, careful not to wake the boy, reaches down under the seat in front of him, finds a box and sets it on his lap.

It's from Dean & DeLuca. Tied with a ribbon. Lecter unknots it. Opens the lid. Inside are Anatolian figs, pate de foie gras, a half-bottle of St. Estephe and some silverware.

BOY
What's that?

Lecter sighs. Then turns to the boy and makes a smile.

LECTER
Which?

BOY
That.

CONTINUED:

LECTER
Liver.

BOY
What are those?

LECTER
Figs.

BOY
And that?

Something in a plastic container.

LECTER
That I don't think you'd like.

BOY
It looks good.

LECTER
It *is* good.

BOY
Can I have some?

LECTER
You're a very unusual boy, aren't you?

BOY
I didn't eat what *they* gave me.

LECTER
Nor *should* you have. It's not even food, as I understand the definition. Which is why I always travel with my own.
(the boy smiles; Lecter smiles)
Are you sure your mother wouldn't disapprove of your accepting food from a stranger?

BOY
She would.

LECTER
Ah, but she's *asleep*.

The boy's eyebrows lift conspiratorially.

LECTER
Which would you like to try?

CONTINUED: (2)

The boy points to the plastic container.

LECTER
This?

The boy nods. Lecter thinks about it. Finally -

LECTER
I suppose it's all right. After all, as I'm sure your mother tells you - *mine* certainly did: It *is* important to always try new things.

As Lecter dips his fork into the appetizer and feeds it to his young, grateful, *adventurous* fellow traveler -

FADE TO BLACK